

A Short and Easie
M E T H O D
WITH THE
D E I S T S.
Wherein the
C E R T A I N T Y
O F T H E
C H R I S T I A N R E L I G I O N

Is demonstrated, by infallible *Proof* from

Four Rules,

WHICH ARE

Incompatible to any *Imposture* that ever yet
has been, or that can possibly be.

by *Leslie.*

In a LETTER to a Friend.

The Eighth Edition.

L O N D O N :

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*with the Epistle of St Ignatius to the
Trallians*





A Short and Easie

METHOD WITH THE DEISTS.

S I R,

I.



N Answer to yours of the Third Instant, I much condole with you your unhappy Circumstances, of being placed amongst such Company, where, as you say, you continually hear the sacred *Scriptures*, and the Histories therein contained, particularly of *Moses*, and of *Christ*, and all *Revealed Religion* turned into Ridicule, by Men who set up for *Sense* and *Reason*. And they say, That there is no greater Ground to believe in *Christ*, than in *Mahomet*; that all these Pretences to *Revelation* are *Cheats*, and ever have been among *Pagans*, *Jews*, *Mahometans*, and *Christians*; That they are all alike *Impositions* of *Cunning* and

Designing Men, upon the *Credulity*, at first, of *simple* and *unthinking* People, till, their Numbers encreasing their *Delusions* grew popular, came, at last, to be establish'd by *Laws*; and then the Force of *Education* and *Custom* gives a Byass to the Judgments of after Ages, till such *Deceits* come really to be believ'd, being receiv'd upon Trust from the Ages foregoing, without examining into the *Original* and *Bottom* of them. Which these our modern Men of *Sense*, (as they desire to be esteem'd) say, That they only do, that they only have their *Judgments* freed from the slavish Authority of *Precedents* and *Laws*, in Matters of *Truth*, which, they say, ought only to be decided by *Reason*; tho' by a prudent Compliance with *Popularity* and *Laws*, they preserve themselves from *Outrage*, and *Legal Penalties*; for none of their Complexion are addicted to *Sufferings* or *Martyrdom*.

Now, Sir, that which you desire from me, is, some short Topic of *Reason*, if such can be found, whereby, without running to *Authorities*, and the intricate Mazes of *Learning*, which breed long Disputes, and which these Men of *Reason* deny by wholesale, tho' they can give no *Reason* for it, only suppose that *Authors* have been Trump'd upon us, *Interpolated*, and *Corrupted*, so that no stress can be laid upon them, tho' it cannot be shewn wherein they are so *Corrupted*; which, in Reason ought to lie upon them to prove, who alledge it; otherwise it is not only a *Precarious*, but a *Guilty Plea*: And the more, that they refrain not to quote Books on their side, for whose Authority there are no better, or not so good Grounds. However, you say, it makes your Disputes endless, and they go away with Noise and Clamour, and a Boast, That there is nothing, at least nothing *Certain*, to be said on the *Christian* side. Therefore you are desirous to find some *One Topick of Reason*, which should demonstrate the Truth of the *Christian Religion*, and at the same Time distinguish

tinguish it from the *Impostures* of *Mabomet*, and the Old *Pagan* World : That our *Deists* may be brought to this *Test*, and be either oblig'd to renounce their *Reason*, and the common *Reason* of *Mankind*, or to submit to the clear Proof, from *Reason*, of the *Christian* Religion, which must be such a *Proof*, as no *Imposture* can pretend to, otherwise it cannot prove the *Christian* Religion not to be an *Imposture*. And, whether such a Proof, one single Proof (to avoid Confusion) is not to be found out, you desire to know from me.

And you say, that you cannot imagine but there must be such a *Proof*, because every *Truth* is in itself *Clear*, and *One* ; and therefore that *One* Reason for it, if it be the true Reason, must be sufficient ; and, if *sufficient*, it is better than *many* ; for *multiplicity* confounds, especially to weak Judgments.

Sir, you have impos'd an hard Task upon me, I wish I could perform it : For tho' every *Truth* is *One*, yet our *Sight* is so feeble, that we cannot (always) come to it *directly*, but by many *Inferences*, and laying of Things together.

But I think, that in the Case before us, there is such a *Proof* as you require, and I will set it down as *Short* and *Plain* as I can.

II. First then, I suppose, that the *Truth* of the *Doctrine* of *CHRIST* will be sufficiently evinced, if the *Matters of Fact*, which are recorded of him in the Gospels be *True* ; for his *Miracles*, if *True*, do vouch the *Truth* of what he delivered.

The same is to be said as to *Moses*. If he brought the Children of *Israel* thro' the *Red-Sea*, in that *miraculous* manner, which is related in *Exodus*, and did such other wonderful Things as are there told of him, it must necessarily follow, that he was sent from *GOD* : These being the strongest Proofs we can desire, and which every *Deist* will confess he would

acquiesce in, if he saw them with his Eyes. Therefore the stress of this Cause will depend upon the Proof of these *Matters of Fact*.

1. And the Method I will take, is, *First*, To lay down such *Rules*, as to the *Truth* of *Matters of Fact*, in General, that where they All meet, such *Matters of Fact* cannot be *false*. And then, *Secondly*, To shew that all these *Rules* do meet in the *Matters of Fact*, of *Moses* and of *Christ*; and that they do not meet in the *Matters of Fact* of *Mahomet*, of the *Heathen Deities*, or can possibly meet in any *Imposture* whatsoever.

2. The *Rules* are these,

1st. That the *Matter of Fact* be such, as that Mens outward Senses, their *Eyes* and *Ears* may be Judges of it.

2. That it be done *Publickly*, in the Face of the World.

3. That not only publick *Monuments* be kept up in Memory of it, but some outward *Actions* to be perform'd.

4. That such *Monuments* and such *Actions* or *Observances* be *Instituted*, and do commence from the *Time* that the *Matter of Fact* was done.

3. The *Two* first *Rules* make it impossible for any such *Matter of Fact* to be impos'd upon Men, at the *Time* when such *Matter of Fact* was said to be done, because every Man's *Eyes* and *Senses* wou'd contradict it. For Example; suppose any Man shou'd pretend, that Yesterday he divided the *Thames*, in Presence of all the People of *London*, and carried the whole City, *Men*, *Women*, and *Children*, over to *Southwark* on dry Land, the *Waters* standing like Walls on both sides: I say, it is morally

rally impossible that he could perswade the People of *London*, that this was true, when every *Man*, *Woman*, and *Child*, could contradict him, and say, That this was a notorious *Falshood*, for that they had not seen the *Thames* so divided, or had gone over on dry Land. Therefore I take it for granted, (and I suppose, with the allowance of all the *Deists* in the World) that no such Imposition could be put upon Men, at the *Time* when such *publick Matter of Fact* was said to be done.

4. THEREFORE it only remains, that such *Matter of Fact* might be invented some time after, when the Men of that Generation, wherein the Thing was said to be done, are all past and gone; and the Credulity of after Ages might be impos'd upon, to believe that Things were done in former Ages, which were not.

AND for this the *Two* last *Rules* secure us as much as the *Two* first *Rules*, in the former Case; for whenever such a *Matter of Fact* came to be invented, if not only *Monuments* were said to remain of it, but likewise that publick *Actions* and *Observances* were constantly us'd ever since the *Matter of Fact* was said to be done; the Deceit must be detected, by no such *Monuments* appearing, and by the Experience of every *Man*, *Woman*, and *Child*, who must know that no such *Actions* or *Observances* were ever us'd by them. For Example; Suppose I should now invent a Story of such a Thing, done a Thousand Years ago, I might perhaps, get some to believe it; but if I say, that not only such a Thing was done, but that from that Day to this, every Man, at the Age of *Twelve Years*, had a *Joint* of his little *Finger* cut off; and that every Man in the Nation did want a *Joint* of such a *Finger*; and that this *Institution* was said to be part of the *Matter of Fact* done so many Years ago, and vouch'd as a *Proof* and *Confirmation* of it, and as having descended without Interruption, and been constantly practis'd,

practis'd, in Memory of such *Matter of Fact*, all along, from the Time that such *Matter of Fact* was done: I say, it is impossible I should be believ'd in such a Case, because every one could contradict me, as to the *Mark* of cutting off a *Joint* of the *Finger*; and that being part of my original *Matter of Fact*, must demonstrate the whole to be false.

III. LET us now come to the *Second* Point, to shew, that the *Matters of Fact* of *Moses*, and of *Christ*, have all these *Rules* or *Marks* before-mention'd; and that neither the *Matters of Fact* of *Mahomet*, or what is reported of the *Heathen Deities*, have the like, and that no *Impostor* can have them all.

I. As to *Moses*, I suppose it will be allow'd me, That he could not have persuaded 600000 Men, that he had brought them out of *Ægypt*, through the *Red Sea*; fed them 40 Years without *Bread*, by *miraculous Manna*, and the other *Matters of Fact* recorded in his Books, if they had not been true. Because every Man's *Senses* that were then alive, must have contradicted it. And therefore he must have impos'd upon all their *Senses*, if he could have made them believe it, when it was *false*, and no such Things done. So that here are the *First* and *Second* of the above mentioned *Four* Marks.

For the same Reason it was equally impossible for him to have made them receive his *Five* Books as Truth, and not to have rejected them, as a manifest *Imposture*; which told of all these Things as done before their *Eyes*, if they had not been so done. See how positively he speaks to them, *Deut. Xi. 2. to Ver. 8. And know you this Day, for I speak not with your Children which have not known, and which have not seen the Chastisement of the Lord your God, his Greatness, his mighty Hand, and his stretched-out Arm, and his Miracles, and his Acts, which he did in the midst of Ægypt, unto Pharaoh the King of Ægypt, and unto all his Land, and what he did unto the*

the Army of Ægypt, unto their Horses, and to their Chariots ; how he made the Water of the Red-Sea to overflow them as they pursued after you ; and how the Lord hath destroyed them unto this day : And what he did unto you in the Wilderiness, until ye came into this Place ; and what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the Sons of Eliab, the Son of Reuben, how the Earth opened her Mouth, and swallowed them up, and their Households, and their Tents, and all the substance that was in their possession, in the midst of all Israel. But your Eyes have seen all the great Acts of the Lord, which he did, &c.

FROM hence we must suppose it impossible that these Books of *Moses*, (if an Imposture) could have been invented and put upon the People, who were then alive, when all these things were said to be done.

THE utmost therefore that even a *Suppose* can stretch to, is, That these Books were wrote in some Age after *Moses*, and put out in his Name.

AND to this, I say, That if it was so, it was impossible that those Books should have been receiv'd, as the Books of *Moses*, in that Age wherein they may have been suppos'd to have been first invented. Why? Because they speak of themselves as deliver'd by *Moses*, and kept in the *Ark* from his time. And it came to pass, when *Moses* had made an end of writing the words of this Law in a Book until they were finished ; that *Moses* commanded the Levites, who bare the *Ark* of the Covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this Book of the Law, and put it in the side of the *Ark* of the Covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee, Deut. xxxi. 24, 25, 26. And there was a Copy of this Book to be left likewise with the King. And it shall be when he sitteth upon the Throne of his Kingdom, that he shall write him a Copy of this Law in a Book, out of that which is before the Priests the Levites : And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his Life : That he may learn to fear the Lord his God,

God, to keep all the Words of this Law and these Statutes to do them, Deut. xvii. 18, 19.

HERE, you see that this *Book of the Law*, speaks of it self, not only as an *History* or *Relation* of what things were then done: But as the *standing* and *municipal Law* and *Statutes* of the *Nation* of the *Jews*, binding the *King* as well as the *People*.

Now, in whatever Age after *Moses* you will suppose this *Book* to have been *Forged*, it was impossible it cou'd be receiv'd as *Truth*; because it was not then to be found, either in the *Ark*, or with the *King*, or any where else: For when first *Invented*, every body must know, that they had never heard of it before.

AND therefore they cou'd less believe it to be the *Book* of their *Statutes*, and the *standing Law* of the *Land*, which they had all along received, and by which they had been *Governed*.

Cou'd any Man, now at this Day, invent a *Book* of *Statutes* or *Acts of Parliament* for *England*, and make it pass upon the Nation as the only *Book* of *Statutes* that ever they had known? As impossible was it for the *Books of Moses* (if they were invented in any Age after *Moses*) to have been receiv'd for what they declare themselves to be, viz. The *Statutes* and *Municipal Law* of the Nation of the *Jews*: And to have persuaded the *Jews*, that they had *Own'd* and *Acknowledg'd* these *Books*, all along from the Days of *Moses*, to that Day in which they were first invented, that is, that they had *Own'd* them before they had ever so much as *Heard* of them. Nay, more, the whole Nation must, in an Instant, forget their former *Laws* and *Government*, if they cou'd receive these *Books*, as being their *Former Laws*. And they cou'd not otherwise receive them, because they vouch'd themselves so to be. Let me ask the *Deists* but this One short Question, Was there ever a *Book of Sham-Laws*, which were not the *Laws* of the *Nation*, *Palm'd* upon any *People*, since the

the World began? If not, With what Face can they say this of the *Book of Laws* of the *Jews*? Why will they say that of them, which they confess impossible in any *Nation*, or among any *People*?

BUT they must be yet more Unreasonable. For the *Books of Moses* have a further Demonstration of their Truth, than even other *Law-Books* have: For they not only contain the *Laws*, but give an *Historical* Account of their *Institution*, and the *Practice* of them from that Time: As of the *Passover* in Memory of the *Death* of the *First Born* in *Egypt*: And that the same Day, all *Num. viii.* the *First Born* of *Israel* both of Man and 17, 18. *Beast*, were by a perpetual *Law*, dedicated to *God*: And the *Levites* taken for all the *First-born* of the *Children* of *Israel*. That *Aaron's Rod* which budded, was kept in the *Ark*, in Memory of the *Rebellion* and wonderful *Destruction* of *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*; and for the Confirmation of the *Priesthood* to the *Tribe* of *Levi*. As likewise the *Pot* of *Manna*, in Memory of their having been fed with it 40 Years in the *Wilderness*. That the *Brazen Serpent* was kept (which remain'd to the Days of *Hezekiah*. 2 *King* xviii. 4.) in Memory of that wonderful Deliverance, by only *Looking* upon it, from the *Biting* of the *Fiery Serpents*. *Num. xxi. 9.* The *Feast* of *Pentecost*, in Memory of the dreadful *Appearance* of *God* upon *Mount Horeb*, &c.

AND besides, these *Remembrances* of particular *Actions* and *Occurrences*, there were other solemn *Institutions* in Memory of their Deliverance out of *Egypt*, in the *General*, which included all the *Particulars*. As of the *Sabbath*. *Deut. 5. 15.* Their *dayly Sacrifices*, and *yearly Expiation*, their *New-Moons*, and several *Feasts* and *Fasts*. So that there were *Yearly*, *Monthly*, *Weekly*, *Daily Remembrances*, and *Recognitions* of these things.

AND not only so, but the *Books* of the same *Moses* tell us, that a particular *Tribe* (of *Levi*)
was

was *Appointed* and *Consecrated* by *God* as his *Priests*; by whose *Hands* and none other, the *Sacrifices* of the *People* were to be offer'd, and these solemn *Institutions* to be celebrated. That it was *Death* for any other to approach the *Altar*. That their *High Priest* wore a *Glorious Mitre*, and magnificent *Robes* of *God's* own *Contrivance*, with the miraculous *Urim* and *Thummim* in his *Breast plate*, whence the *divine Responses* were given.

Numbers That at his *Word*, the *King*, and all the
xxvii. 21. *People* were to go out, and to come in.

That these *Levites* were likewise the
Deut. xvii. *Chief Judges*, even in all *Civil Causes*,
8. to 13. and that it was *Death* to resist their

1 Chr. xxiii. *Sentence*. Now when ever it can be

4. suppos'd that these *Books* of *Moses* were
forg'd, in some *Ages* after *Moses*, it
is impossible they could have been received as *True*,
unless the *Forgers* could have made the whole
Nation believe, that they had received these
Books from their *Fathers*, had been instructed in
them when they were *Children*, and had taught
them to their *Children*, moreover, that they had
all been circumcised, and did circumcise their
Children, in pursuance to what was commanded
in these *Books*, that they had observed the yearly
Passover, the weekly *Sabbath*, the *New-Moons*,
and all these several *Feasts*, *Fasts*, and *Ceremonies*
commanded in these *Books* : That they had never
eaten any *Swines* *Flesh*, or other *Meats* prohibited
in these *Books* : That they had a magnificent *Taber-*
nacle, with a visible *Priesthood* to *Administer* in it,
which was confined to the *Tribe* of *Levi*; over
whom was placed a glorious *High-Priest*, cloath'd
with great and mighty *Prerogatives*, whose *Death*
only could deliver those that were fled

Num. xxxv. to the *Cities* of *Refuge*. And that
25. 28. these *Priests* were their ordinary

Judges, even in *Civil Matters* : I say,
was

was it possible to have persuaded a whole *Nation* of Men, that they had *Known* and *Practised* all these Things, if they had not done it? or, *Secondly*. To have receiv'd a *Book* for Truth, which said they had *practised* them, and appeal'd to that *Practice*? So that here are the *Third* and *Fourth* of the *Marks* above-mentioned.

BUT now let us descend to the utmost Degree of *Supposition*, viz. That these Things were *Practised*, before these *Books* of *Moses* were *Forg'd*; and that these *Books* did only *impose* upon the *Nation*, in making them believe, That they had kept these *Observances* in Memory of such and such Things, as were inserted in those *Books*.

WELL then, let us proceed upon this *Supposition*, (however groundless) and now, will not the same *Impossibilities* occur, as in the former Case? For *First*, This must suppose that the *Jews* kept all these *Observances* in Memory of *Nothing*, or without knowing any thing of their *Original*, or the *Reason* why they kept them. Whereas these very *Observances* did express the *Ground* and *Reason* of their being kept, as the *Passover* in Memory of *God's* *Passing over* the *Children* of the *Israelites*, in that Night wherein he slew all the *First-born* of *Egypt*, and so of the Rest.

BUT *Secondly*, Let us suppose, contrary both to *Reason*, and *Matter of Fact*, That the *Jews* did not know any *Reason* at all why they kept these *Observances*; yet was it possible to put it upon them, That they had kept these *Observances* in Memory of what they had never heard of before that Day, whensoever you will suppose that these *Books* of *Moses* were first *Forged*? For Example, suppose I shou'd now forge some *Romantick* Story, of strange Things done 1000 Years ago, and in Confirmation of this, should endeavour to persuade the *Christian* World, that they had all along, from that Day to this, kept the *First-Day* of the *Week* in Memory of
such

such an *Hero*, an *Apollonius*, a *Barcosbas*, or a *Mabomet*; and had all been *Baptiz'd* in his Name; and *Swore* by his Name, and upon that very *Book*, (which I had then *forged*, and which they never saw before) in their publick *Judicatures*; that this *Book* was their *Gospel* and *Law*, which they had ever since that Time, these 1000 Years past *universally* receiv'd and own'd, and none other. I wou'd ask any *Deist*, whether he thinks it *possible*, that such a *Cheat* cou'd pass, or such a *Legend* be receiv'd as the *Gospel* of *Christians*; and that they could be made believe, that they never had any other *Gospel*? The same Reason is as to the *Books* of *Moses*; and must be, as to every *Matter of Fact*, which has all the four *Marks* before-mention'd; and these *Marks* secure any such *Matter of Fact* as much from being *Invented* and *impos'd* in any after Ages, as at the Time when such *Matters of Fact* were said to be done.

LET me give one very familiar Example more in this Case. There is the *Stonhenge* in *Salisbury-Plain*, every body knows it; and yet none knows the Reason why those Great *Stones* were set there, or by whom, or in Memory of what.

Now suppose I shou'd write a *Book* to *Morrow*, and tell there, That these *Stones* were set up by *Hercules*, *Polyphemus*, or *Garagantua*, in Memory of such and such of their *Actions*. And for a further Confirmation of this, shou'd say, in this *Book*, That it was wrote at the Time when such *Actions* were done, and by the very *Actors* themselves, or *Eye-Witnesses*. And that this *Book* had been receiv'd as *Truth*, and quoted by *Authors* of the greatest *Reputation* in all Ages since. Moreover, that this *Book* was well known in *England*, and enjoyn'd by *Act of Parliament* to be taught our *Children*, and that we did teach it to our *Children*, and had been taught it our selves when we were *Children*. I ask any *Deist*, Whether he thinks this could pass upon *England*?

land? And whether, if I, or any other should insist upon it, we should not, instead of being believ'd, be sent to *Bedlam*?

No w let us compare this with the *Stonhenge*, as I may call it, or *Twelve* great *Stones* set up at *Gilgal*, which is told in the iv. *Chap.* of *Joshua*. There it is said, *Ver. 6.* that the Reason why they were set up, was, that when their *Children*, in after *Ages*, should ask the Meaning of it, it should be told them.

AND the thing in Memory of which they were set up, was such as cou'd not possibly be impos'd upon that *Nation*, at that *Time*, when it was said to be done, it was as wonderful and miraculous as their Passage thro' the *Red-Sea*.

AND withal, free from a very poor Objection, which the *Deists* have advanc'd against that Miracle of the *Red-Sea*: Thinking to solve it by a *Spring-Tide*, with the Concurrence of a *strong Wind*, happening at the same *Time*, which left the *Sand* so dry, as that the *Israelites* being all *Foot*, might pass thro' the *Omsey* Places and *Holes*, which it must be suppos'd the *Sea* left behind it: But that the *Aegyptians* being all *Horse* and *Chariots*, stuck in those *Holes* and were entangl'd, so as that they cou'd not March so fast as the *Israelites*: And that this was all the Meaning of its being said, That God took off their (the *Aegyptians*) *Chariot-Wheels*, that they drove them heavily, So that they wou'd make nothing extraordinary, at least, not *Miraculous* in all this Action.

THIS is advanc'd in *Le Clerk's Dissertations upon Genesis*, lately Printed in *Holland*, and that Part with others of the like Tendency, endeavouring to resolve other *Miracles*, as that of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, &c. into the mere *Natural* Causes, are put into *English* by the well known *T. Brown*, for the *Edification* of the *Deists* in *England*.

BUT these Gentlemen have forgot, that the *Israelites* had great *Herds* of many *Thousand Cattle* with

with them ; which wou'd be apter to *stray*, and fall into those *Holes*, and *Omsey* Places in the *Sand*, than *Horses* with *Riders*, who might direct them.

BUT such *precarious*, and *silly* *Supposes* are not worth the Answering. If there had been no more in this *Passage* thro' the *Red-Sea*, than that of a *Spring-Tide*, &c. It had been impossible for *Moses* to have made the *Israelites* believe that *Relation* given of it in *Exodus*, with so many *Particulars*, which themselves saw, to be true.

AND all those *Scriptures* which magnifie this *Action*, and appeal to it as a full *Demonstration* of the miraculous Power of God ; must be reputed as *Romance* or *Legend*.

I SAY this for the sake of some *Christians*, who think it no *Prejudice* to the *Truth* of the *Holy Bible*, but rather an *Advantage*, as rendering it more easy to be believ'd, if they can solve whatever seems *Miraculous* in it, by the Power of *second Causes* : And so to make all, as they speak, *Natural* and *Easie*. Wherein, if they cou'd prevail, the *natural* and *easie* Result wou'd be, not to believe one Word in all those *Sacred Oracles*. For if things be not, as they are told in any *Relation*, that *Relation* must be *false*. And if *false* in *Part*, we cannot *Trust* to it, either in *Whole*, or in *Part*.

HERE are to be excepted, *Mis-Translations*, and *Errors*, either in *Copy*, or in *Press*. But where there is no Room for supposing of these, as where all *Copies* do agree ; there we must either *Receive* all, or *Reject* all. I mean in any Book that pretends to be written from the *Mouth* of *God*. For in other common *Histories*, we may believe *Part* and reject *Part*, as we see Cause.

BUT to return. The *Passage* of the *Israelites* over *Jordan*, in Memory of which those *Stones* at *Gilgal* were set up, is free from all those little *Carpings* before-mentioned, that are made as to the *Passage* thro' the *Red-Sea*. For Notice was given to the
Israelites

Israelites the Day before, of this great *Miracle* to be done. *Josb. iii. 5.* It was done at Noon-day, before the whole *Nation*. And when the *Waters* of *Jordan* were divided, it was not at any *Low-Ebb*, but at the Time when that River overflowed all his Banks. *ver. 15.* And it was done, not by *Winds*, or in length of Time, which *Winds* must take to do it: But all on the suddain, as soon as the Feet of the *Priests* that bare the *Ark* were dipped in the Brim of the *Water*, Then the *Waters* which came down from above, stood and rose up upon an *Heap*, very far from the *City* *Adam*, that is beside *Zaretan*: And those that came down toward the *Sea* of the *Plain*, even the *Salt-Sea*, fail'd, and were cut off: And the *People* passed over, right against *Jericho*. The *Priests* stood in the midst of *Jordan*, till all the *Armies* of *Israel* had passed over. And it came to pass, when the *Priests* that bare the *Ark* of the *Covenant* of the *Lord*, were come up, out of the *Midst* of *Jordan*, and the *Soles* of the *Priests* Feet were lift up upon the *Dry Land*, that the *Waters* of *Jordan* returned unto their *Place*, and flowed over all his Banks as they did before. And the *People* came up out of *Jordan*, on the *Tenth Day* of the first *Month*, and encamped in *Gilgal* on the *East Border* of *Jericho*. And those *Twelve Stones* which they took out of *Jordan*, did *Joshua* pitch in *Gilgal*. And he spake unto the *Children* of *Israel*, saying, When your *Children* shall ask their *Fathers* in *Time* to come, saying, what mean these *Stones*? Then shall ye let your *Children* know, saying, *Israel* came over this *Jordan* on *dry Land*. For the *Lord* your *God* dryed up the *Waters* of *Jordan* from before you, until ye were passed over; as the *Lord* your *God* did to the *Red-Sea*, which he dryed up, from before us, until we were gone over. That all the *People* of the *Earth* might know the *Hand* of the *Lord*, that it is *Mighty*: That ye might fear the *Lord* your *God* for ever. Chap. iv. from *ver. 18.*

If the Passage over the *Red-Sea*, had been only taking Advantage of a *Spring-Tide*, or the like, How wou'd this teach *all the People of the Earth*, that *the Hand of the Lord was Mighty* ! How wou'd a Thing, no more Remarkable, have been taken Notice of thro' all the World ! How wou'd it have taught *Israel* to *fear the Lord*, when they must know, that notwithstanding, of all these *Big-Words*, there was so *Little* in it ! How cou'd they have believ'd, or receiv'd a *Book*, as *Truth*, which they knew, told the Matter so far otherwise from what it was !

BUT, as I said, this Passage over *Jordan*, which is here compar'd to that of the *Red-Sea*, is free from those *Cavils* that are made as to that of the *Red-Sea*, and is a further Attestation to it, being said to be done in the same Manner as was that of the *Red-Sea*.

Now, to form our Argument, let Us suppose, that there never was any such Thing as that *Passage* over *Jordan*. That these *Stones* at *Gilgal* were set up, upon some other Occasion, in some after Age. And then, that some designing Man invented this *Book* of *Joshua*, and said, that it was wrote by *Joshua*, at that Time. And gave this *Stonage* at *Gilgal*, for a *Testimony* of the *Truth* of it. Wou'd not every Body say to him, We know the *Stonage* at *Gilgal* : But we never heard before of this Reason for it ? Nor of this *Book* of *Joshua* ? Where has it been all this while ? And *Where*, and *How* came you, after so many Ages to find it ? Besides, this *Book* tells Us, that this *Passage* over *Jordan* was ordain'd to be taught our *Children*, from Age to Age : And therefore, that they were always to be *Instructed* in the Meaning of that *Stonage* at *Gilgal* as a *Memorial* of it. But we were never taught it when we were *Children* ; nor did ever teach our *Children* any such Thing. And it is not likely, That cou'd have been forgotten, while so remarkable a *Stonage* did continue, which was set up for that, and no other End !

AND

A N D if, for the Reasons before given, no such *Imposition* cou'd be put upon Us, as to the *Stonage* at *Salisbury-Plain* ; How much less cou'd it be as to the *Stonage* at *Gilgal* ?

A N D if where we know not the *Reason* of a bare naked *Monument*, such a *Sham-Reason* cannot be impos'd : How much more is it impossible to impose upon Us, in *Actions* and *Observances*, which we *celebrate* in Memory of particular *Passages* ? How impossible to make Us *forget* those *Passages* which we daily *Commemorate* ; and persuade Us, that we had always *kept* such *Institutions* in Memory of what we never heard of before ; That is, that We knew it, before We knew it !

A N D if we find it thus impossible for an *Imposition* to be put upon Us, even in some Things, which have not all the *Four-Marks* before-mentioned : How much more impossible is it, that any *Deceit* shou'd be in that Thing, where all the *Four-Marks* do meet !

T H I S has been shew'd in the *First* Place, as to the *Matters of Fact* of *Moses*.

2. THEREFORE I come now (*Secondly*) to shew, that, as in the *Matters of Fact* of *Moses*, so likewise, all these *Four Marks* do meet in the *Matters of Fact*, which are recorded in the *Gospel*, of Our Blessed *Saviour*. And my Work herein will be the shorter, because all that is said before, of *Moses* and his Books, is every Way as applicable to *Christ* and His *Gospel*. His *Works* and *Miracles* are there said to be done *publickly*, in the Face of the World, as he argu'd to his Accusers, *I spake openly to the World, and in Secret have I said Nothing*, Joh. xviii. 20. It is told, and *Act*. ii. 41. that Three thousand at one Time ; *Act*. iv. 4. that above Five thousand at another Time, were converted, upon Conviction of what themselves had seen, what had been done publickly before their Eyes, wherein it was impossible to have impos'd upon them. There,

fore here were the two First of the *Rules* before-mention'd.

THEN for the Two second : *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper* were instituted as perpetual *Memo-rials* of these Things; and they were not instituted in after-Ages, but at the very Time when these Things were said to be done ; and have been observed without Interruption, in all Ages through the whole Christian World, down all the Way from that Time to this. And *Christ* Himself did ordain *Apostles*, and other *Ministers* of His *Gospel*, to *Preach*, and *Administer* these *Sacraments* ; and to *Matth.* Govern His Church : And that *always*, xxviii. 20. *even unto the End of the World*. Accordingly they have continu'd by regular *Succession*, to this Day : And, no Doubt, ever shall, while the Earth shall last. So that the Christian *Clergy* are as notorious a *Matter of Fact*, as the *Tribe of Levi* among the *Jews*. And the *Gospel* is as much a *Law* to the *Christians*, as the *Book of Moses* to the *Jews* : And it being Part of the *Matter of Fact* related in the *Gospel*, that such an *Order of Men* were appointed by *Christ*, and to *continue to the End of the World* ; consequently, if the *Gospel* was a *Fiction*, and invented (as it must be) in some Ages after *Christ* ; then, at that Time, when it was first invented, there cou'd be no such *Order of Clergy*, as deriv'd themselves from the Institution of *Christ* ; which must give the *Lye* to the *Gospel*, and demonstrate the whole to be *False*. And the *Matters of Fact* of *Christ* being press'd to be *True*, no otherwise than as there was, at that Time (when- ever the *Deists* will suppose the *Gospel* to be *Forged*) not only publick *Sacraments* of *Christ's* Institution, but an *Order of Clergy*, likewise of his Appointment to *Administer* them : And it being impossible there cou'd be any such Things before they were *In-vented*, it is as impossible that they should be *Recei-ved* when *Invented*. And therefore, by what was said
above,

above, it was as impossible to have impos'd upon Mankind in this Matter, by inventing of it in after-Ages, as at the Time when those Things were said to be done.

3. THE *Matters of Fact* of *Mahomet*, or what is Fabled of the *Deities*, do all want some of the aforesaid *four Rules*, whereby the Certainty of *Matters of Fact* is demonstrated. First, for *Mahomet*, he pretended to no *Miracles*, as he tells us in his *Alcoran*, c. 6. &c. and those which are commonly told of him pass among the *Mahometans* themselves, but as *Legendary Fables*; and, as such are rejected by the *Wise*, and *Learned* among them; as the *Legends* of their *Saints* are in the *Church of Rome*. See Dr. *Prideaux* his *Life of Mahomet*, Page 34.

BUT, in the next Place, those which are told of him, do all want the Two first *Rules* before-mentioned. For his pretended Converse with the *Moon*; his *Mersea*, or Night-Journey from *Mecca* to *Jerusalem*, and thence to *Heaven*, &c. were not performed before any Body. We have only his own Word for them. And they are as groundless as the Delusions of *Fox*, or *Muggleton* among our selves. The same is to be said (in the second Place) of the Fables of the *Heathen Gods*, of *Mercury's* stealing Sheep, *Jupiter's* turning himself into a Bull, and the like; besides the *Folly* and *Unworthiness* of such *senseless* pretended *Miracles*. And, moreover, the *Wise* among the *Heathen* did reckon no otherwise of these but as *Fables*, which had a *Mythology*, or *Myssical* meaning in them, of which several of them have given us the *Rationale*, or *Explication*. And it is plain enough that *Ovid* meant no other by all his *Metamorphoses*.

IT is true, the *Heathen Deities* had their *Priests*: They had likewise *Feasts*, *Games*, and other *publick Institutions* in Memory of them. But all these want the Fourth *Mark*, viz. That such *Priest-Hood* and *Institutions* shou'd *Commence* from the Time that such

Things as they Commemorate, were said to be done; otherwise they cannot secure after Ages from the *Imposture*, by detecting it, at the Time when first *Invented*, as hath been argu'd before. But the *Bacchanalia*, and other *Heathen-Feasts* were instituted many Ages after what was reported of these Gods was said to be done, and therefore can be no *Proof* of them. And the *Priests* of *Bacchus*, *Apollo*, &c. were not *Ordain'd* by these supposed *Gods*: But were appointed by others, in after Ages, only in *Honour* to them. And therefore these *Orders* of *Priests* are no *Evidence* to the *Truth* of the *Matters of Fact*, which are reported of their *Gods*.

IV. Now, to apply what has been said, You may challenge all the *Deists* in the World to shew any *Action* that is *Fabulous*, which has all the four *Rules*, or *Marks* before-mention'd. No, it is impossible. And (to resume a little what is spoke to before) the *Histories* of *Exodus*, and the *Gospel* cou'd never have been receiv'd, if they had not been true; because the *Institution* of the *Priesthood* of *Levi*, and of *Christ*: Of the *Sabbath*, the *Pass-over*, of *Circumcision*, of *Baptism*, and the *Lord's-Supper*, &c. are there related, as descending all the way down from those Times, without Interruption. And it is full as impossible to persuade Men, that they had been *Circumcis'd*, *Baptiz'd*, had *Circumcis'd* or *Baptiz'd* their *Children*, celebrated *Pass-overs*, *Sabbaths*, *Sacraments*, &c. under the *Government*, and *Administration* of a certain *Order* of *Priests*, if they had done none of these Things, as to make them believe that they had gone through *Seas* upon *Dry land*, seen the *Dead* raised, &c. And without believing of these, it was impossible that either the *Law*, or the *Gospel* cou'd have been receiv'd.

AND the *Truth* of the *Matters of Fact* of *Exodus* and the *Gospel*, being no otherwise press'd upon Men,

Men, than as they have practised such *publick Institutions*; it is appealing to the *Senses* of Mankind for the Truth of them: And makes it impossible for any to have invented such Stories in after Ages, without a palpable detection of the Cheat, when first invented; as impossible as to have impos'd upon the *Senses* of Mankind at the Time, when such *publick Matters of Fact* were said to be done.

V. I do not say, that every thing which wants these four *Marks* is *False*: But, that nothing can be *False* which has them *All*.

I have no manner of Doubt, that there was such a Man as *Julius Caesar*; that he fought at *Pharsalia*, was kill'd in the *Senate-House*; and many other Matters of Fact of Antient Times, tho' we keep no *publick Observances* in Memory of them.

BUT this shews that the Matters of Fact of *Moses* and of *Christ*, have come down to us better guarded than any other Matters of Fact how true soever.

AND yet our *Deists* who would laugh any Man out of the World, as an irrational *Brute*, that should offer to deny *Caesar*, or *Alexander*, *Homer* or *Virgil*, their *publick Works* and Actions, do, at the same time value themselves as the only Men of *Wit* and *Sense*, of *Free*, *Generous*, and *Unbiass'd Judgments*, for ridiculing the Histories of *Moses* and *Christ*, that are infinitely better attested, and guarded with infallible Marks, which the others want.

VI. BESIDES that, the Importance of the Subject wou'd oblige all Men to enquire more narrowly into the one than the other: For what Consequence is it to me, or to the World, whether there was such a Man as *Caesar*; whether he beat or was beaten at *Pharsalia*; whether *Homer* or *Virgil* wrote such Books; and whether what is related in the *Iliads* or *Aeneids* be *True* or *False*? It is not two Pence up

or down to any Man in the World. And therefore it is worth no Man's while to enquire into it, either to *Oppose* or *Justify* the Truth of these Relations.

BUT our very *Souls* and *Bodies*, both this Life and Eternity, are concern'd in the Truth of what is related in the Holy *Scriptures*; and therefore Men wou'd be more inquisitive to search into the Truth of these, than of any other Matters of Fact; Examine and sift them narrowly; and find out the *Deceit*, if any such cou'd be found; For it concern'd them *Nearly*, and was of the last Importance to them.

How unreasonable then is it to reject these Matters of Fact so *sifted*, so *examin'd*, and so *attested* as no other Matters of Fact in the World ever were; and yet to think it the most highly *Unreasonable*, even to *Madness*, to deny other Matters of Fact, which have not the thousandth part of their *Evidence*, and are of no *Consequence* at all to Us, whether *True* or *False*!

VII. THERE are several other *Topics*, from whence the Truth of the Christian Religion is evinced to all who judge by *Reason*, and give themselves leave to *consider*. As the *Improbability* that Ten or Twelve poor illiterate *Fisher-men* should form a Design of converting the whole World to believe their *Delusions*; and the *Impossibility* of their effecting it, without Force of *Arms*, *Learning*, *Oratory*, or any one visible thing that could recommend them! And to impose a Doctrine quite *opposite* to the *Lusts* and *Pleasures* of Men, and all *worldly Advantages*, or *Enjoyments*! And this in an Age of so great *Learning* and *Sagacity*, as that wherein the Gospel was first preach'd! That these *Apostles* should not only undergo all the *Scorn* and *Contempt*, but the severest *Persecutions*, and most cruel *Deaths* that could be inflicted, in Attestation to what themselves knew

knew to be a meer *Deceit* and *Forgery* of their own contriving! Some have suffer'd for *Errors* which they thought to be *Truth*; but never any for what themselves *knew* to be *Lies*. And the *Apostles* must know what they taught to be *Lyes*, if it was so, because they spoke of those things which
Acts iv. 20. they said, they had both *seen* and *heard*,
 1 *Joh.* I. i. had *look'd upon*, and handled with their *Hands*, &c.

Neither can it be said, that they, perhaps, might have propos'd some temporal Advantages to themselves, but miss'd of them, and met with *Sufferings* instead of them: For, if it had been so, it is more than probable, that when they saw their Disappointment, they would have discover'd their *Conspiracy*; especially when they might not have only sav'd their *Lives*, but got great *Rewards* for doing of it; that not one of them should ever have been brought to do this!

BUT this is not all: for they tell us, that their *Master* bid them expect nothing but *Sufferings* in this World. This is the Tenure of all that *Gospel* which they taught. And they told the same to all whom they *Converted*. So that here was no Disappointment.

FOR, all that were *Converted* by them, were *Converted* upon the certain Expectation of *Sufferings*, and bidden *prepare* for it. *Christ* commanded his Disciples to take up their *Cross* daily and follow him; and told them, that in the World they should have *Tribulation*: That whoever did not forsake *Father*, *Mother*, *Wife*, *Children*, *Lands*, and their very *Lives*, could not be his Disciples: That he, *who sought to save his Life* in this World, should *lose* it in the next.

Now, That this despised *Doctrine* of the *Cross* should prevail so Universally against the *Allurements* of *Flesh* and *Blood*, and all the *Blandishments* of this World; against the *Rage* and *Persecution* of
 all

all the Kings and Powers of the Earth, must shew its Original to be *Divine*, and its Protector *Almighty*. What is it else, could Conquer without *Arms*, Persuade without *Rhetorick* ; overcome *Enemies* ; disarm *Tyrants*, and subdue *Empires* without *Opposition* !

VIII. WE may add to all this, the Testimonies of the most bitter *Enemies* and *Persecutors* of Christianity, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to the Truth of the *Matter of Fact* of *Christ*, such as *Josephus* and *Tacitus* ; of Which the First flourish'd about *Forty* Years after the Death of *Christ*, and the Other about *Seventy* Years after : So that they were capable of examining into the *Truth*, and wanted not *Prejudice* and *Malice* sufficient to have inclin'd them to deny the *Matter of Fact* itself of *Christ* : But their Confessing to it, as likewise *Lucian*, *Celsus*, *Porphyry*, and *Julian* the Apostate ; the *Mahometans* since, and all other *Enemies* of Christianity that have arisen in the World, is an undeniable Attestation to the Truth of the *Matter of Fact*.

IX. BUT there is another Argument more strong and convincing than even this *Matter of Fact* ; more than the Certainty of what I see with my Eyes : and which the Apostle *Peter* call'd a *more sure Word*, that is, *Proof*, than what he saw and heard upon the *Holy Mount*, when our Blessed Saviour was *Transfigured* before him and two other of the *Apostles* : For, having repeated that Passage as a Proof of that whereof they were *Eye-Witnesses*, and heard the *Voice* from *Heaven* giving Attestation to our Lord *Christ*, 2 Pet. i. 16, 17, 18. He says, ver. 19. *We have also a more sure Word of Prophecy* for the Proof of this *Jesus* being the *Messiah*, that is, the Prophecies which had gone before of *Him*, from the Beginning of the World ; and *All* exactly fulfilled in *Him*.

MEN may dispute an *Imposition* or *Delusion* upon our outward Senses; but how that can be *False* that has been so long, even from the Beginning of the World, and so often by all the Prophets, in several Ages foretold; how can this be an *Imposition*, or a *Forgery*?

THIS is particularly insisted on in the *Method with the Jews*: And even the *Deists* must confess, that that BOOK we call the *Old-Testament*, was in the Hands of the *Jews* long before our *Saviour* came into the World. And if they will be at the Pains to compare the *Prophecies* that are there of the *Messiah*, with the Fulfilling of them, as to *Time*, *Place*, and all other *Circumstances*, in the *Person*, *Birth*, *Life*, *Death*, *Resurrection*, and *Ascension* of our Blessed *Saviour*, will find this Proof what our *Apostle* here calls it, a *Light shining in a dark place, until the Day dawn, and the Day-star arise in your Hearts*. Which God grant. Here is no possibility of *Deceit* or *Imposture*.

OLD *Prophecies*, (and all so agreeing) cou'd not have been contrived to countenance a new *Cheat*: And nothing cou'd be a *Cheat*, that cou'd fulfil all these.

FOR this therefore I refer the *Deists* to the *Method with the Jews*.

I desire them likewise to look there, *Seet. XI.* and consider the *Prophecies* given so long ago, of which they see the Fulfilling at this Day, with their own Eyes, of the State of the *Jews*, for many Ages past, and at present; without a *King*, or *Priest*, or *Temple*, or *Sacrifice*, scattered to the four *Winds*, Sifted as with a *Sieve*, among all *Nations*; yet preserved, and always so to be, a distinct People from all others of the whole Earth. Whereas those Mighty *Monarchies* which Oppressed the *Jews*, and which Commanded the *World*, in their turns; and had the greatest *Humane Prospect* of *Perpetuity*, were to be extinguish'd, as they have been, even that their Names should be blotted out from under Heaven.

As likewise, That as Remarkable of our Blessed *Saviour*, concerning the *Preservation* and *Progress* of the

the *Christian Church*, when in her *Swadling Cloaths*, consisting only of a few poor *Fisher-Men*. Not by the *Sword*, as that of *Mahomet*, but under all the *Persecution* of *Men* and *Hell*; which yet should not prevail against Her.

BUT though I offer these, as not to be slighted by the *Deists*, to which they can shew nothing equal in all prophane History; and in which it is impossible any *Cheat* can lie; yet I put them not upon the same Foot as the *Prophecies* before-mention'd of the *Marks* and *Coming* of the *Messiah*, which have been since the *World* began.

AND that General Expectation of the whole Earth, at the Time of His Coming, insisted upon in the Method with the *Jews*, Sect. V. is Greatly to be Notic'd.

BUT, I say, the foregoing *Prophecies* of our Saviour, are so strong a Proof, as even *Miracles* wou'd not be sufficient to break their Authority.

I mean, if it were possible that a *True Miracle* could be wrought, in contradiction to them. For that would be for God to contradict Himself.

BUT no *Sign* or *Wonder*, that could possibly be solv'd, should shake this *Evidence*.

IT is this that keeps the *Jews* in their Obstinacy. Tho' they cannot deny the *Matters* of *Fact* done by our *Blessed Saviour*, to be truly *Miracles*, if so done as said. Nor can they deny that they were so done, because they have all the *Four Marks* beforementioned. Yet they cannot yield! Why? Because they think that the *Gospel* is in contradiction to the *Law*. Which, if it were, the Consequence would be unavoidable, that *Both* cou'd not be *True*. To solve this, is the Business of the Method with the *Jews*. But the *Contradiction*, which they suppose, is in their *Comments* that they put upon the *Law*; especially they expect a *Literal* Fulfilling of those *Promises* of the *Restoration* of *Jerusalem*, and outward *Glories* of the *Church*, of which

which there is such frequent mention in the Books of *Moses*, the *Psalms*, and all the *Prophets*. And many *Christians* do expect the same; and take those *Texts* as *Litterally* as the *Jews* do. We do *Believe* and *Pray* for the *Conversion* of the *Jews*. For this *End* they have been so miraculously *Preserved*, according to the *Prophecies* so long before of it. And when that *Time* shall *Come*, as they are the most *Honourable* and *Ancient* of all the *Nations* on the *Earth*, so will their *Church* Return to be the *Mother* *Christian Church*, as she was at *First*: And *Rome* must *Surrender* to *Jerusalem*. Then all *Nations* will *Flow* thither. And even *Ezekiel's* *Temple* may be *Litterally* Built *There*, in the *Metropolis* of the whole *Earth*; which *Jerusalem* must be, when the *Fulness* of the *Gentiles*, shall meet with the *Conversion* of the *Jews*. For no *Nation* will then contend with the *Jews*, nor *Church* with *Jerusalem* for *Supremacy*. All *Nations* will be ambitious to draw their *Original* from the *Jews*, whose are the *Fathers*, and from whom, as concerning the *Flesh*, *Christ* came.

THEN will be fulfill'd that outward *Grandeur* and *Restauration* of the *Jews* and of *Jerusalem*, which they expect, pursuant to the *Prophecies*.

THEY pretend not that this is limited to any particular *Time* of the *Reign* of the *Messiah*. They are sure it will not be at the beginning; for they expect, to go thro' great *Conflicts* and *Tryals* with their *Messiah*, (as the *Christian Church* has done) before his *Final Conquest*, and that they come to *Reign* with him. So that this is no *Obstruction* to their *Embracing* of *Christianity*. They see the same things fulfill'd in us, which they expect *Themselves*; and we expect the same things they do.

I tell this to the *Deists*, lest they may think that the *Jews* have some stronger *Arguments* than they know of; That they are not persuaded by the *Miracles* of our *Blessed Saviour*, and by the fulfilling of
of

of all the *Prophecies* in him, that were made concerning the *Messiah*.

As I said before, I wou'd not plead even *Miracles* against these.

AND if this is sufficient to persuade a *Jew*, it is much more so to a *Deist*, who labours not under these *Objections*.

BESIDES, I wou'd not seem to clash with that (in a sound Sense) reasonable *Caution*, us'd by *Christian* Writers, not to put the Issue of the *Truth* wholly upon *Miracles*, without this addition, when not done in Contradiction to the *Revelations* already given in the *Holy Scriptures*.

AND they do it upon this Consideration, That tho' it is impossible to suppose, that *God* wou'd work a real *Miracle*, in contradiction to what he has already *Reveal'd*: Yet Men may be impos'd upon by *False* and *Seeming Miracles*, and *pretended Revelations*, (as there are many Examples, especially in the *Church of Rome*) and so may be shaken in the *Faith*, if they keep not to the *Holy Scriptures* as their *Rule*.

WE are told, 2 *Thess.* ii. 9. of him whose coming is after the working of *Satan*, with all *Power*, and *Signs*, and *Lying-wonders*. And *Rev.* xiii. 14. xvi. 14. and xix. 20. of the *Devil*, and *False-Prophets* working *Miracles*. But the Word, in all these Places, is only *Σημεία* *Signs*, that is, as it is render'd *Matth.* xxv. 24. which tho' sometimes it may be us'd to signify *Real Miracles*, yet not always, not in these Places. For though every *Miracle* be a *Sign* and a *Wonder*, yet every *Sign*, or *Wonder*, is not a *Miracle*.

X. Here it may be proper to consider a common *Topic* of the *Deists*, who when they are not able to stand out against the Evidence of *Fact*, that such and such *Miracles* have been done: Then turn

about and *deny* such Things to be *Miracles*, at least. That we can never be *Sure* whether any *wonderful* Thing that is shewn to us, be a *True* or a *False Miracle*.

AND the Great Argument they go upon, is this, That a *Miracle* being that which exceeds the *Power of Nature*, We cannot know what exceeds it, unless we knew the utmost *Extent* of the *Power of Nature*: And no Man pretends to know that; therefore, that no Man can *certainly* know whether any *Event* be *miraculous*. And, consequently, he may be *cheated* in his Judgment between *True* and *False-Miracles*.

To which I answer, That Men may be so *Cheated*, And there are many Examples of it.

BUT that though we may not always *Know* when we are *Cheated*, yet we can *certainly* tell in many Cases, when we are *not Cheated*.

For tho' we do not know the utmost *Extent* of the *Power of Nature*, perhaps, in any one Thing, yet it does not follow, that we know not the *Nature* of any thing, in some *measure*; and that *certainly* too. For Example; Tho' I do not know the utmost *Extent* of the *Power of Fire*, yet I *certainly* know, That it is the *Nature of Fire* to *burn*: And that when proper *Fuel* is administered to it, it is contrary to the *Nature of Fire* not to *consume* it. Therefore, if I see *three* Men taken off the Street, in their common wearing Apparel, and without any *Preparation*, cast into the midst of a *Burning Fiery Furnace*; and that the *Flame* was so *ferce*, that it *burnt* up those Men that threw them in; and yet that these who were thrown in, shou'd walk up and down in the Bottom of the *Furnace*, and I shou'd see a *Fourth* Person with them of *Glorious* Appearance like the Son of God; and that these Men shou'd come up again out of the *Furnace* without

without any harm, or so much as the *smell* of *Fire* upon themselves, or their *Cloaths*, I could not be deceiv'd in thinking that there was a Stop put to the *Nature* of *Fire*, as to these Men; and that it had its Effect upon the Men whom it *burned* at the same Time.

·AGAIN, Tho' I cannot tell how *Wonderful* and *Sudden* an *Increase* of *Corn* might be produc'd by the concurrence of many *Causes*, as a *warm Climate*, the *fertility* of the *Soil*, &c. Yet this I can certainly know, That there is not that *Natural Force* in the *Breath* of two or three *Words* spoken to *multiply* one small *Loaf* of *Bread* so *fast*, in the *breaking* of it, as *Truly* and *Really*, not only in *Appearance* and *Shew* to the *Eye*, but to fill the *Bellies* of several *Thousand* hungry *Persons*; and that the *Fragments* shou'd be much more than the *Bread* was at first.

So neither in a *Word* spoken, to raise the *Dead*, cure *Diseases*, &c.

THEREFORE, tho' we know not the utmost *Extent* of the *Power* of *Nature*; yet we can certainly know what is *Contrary* to the *Nature* of several such Things as we do know.

AND therefore tho' we may be cheated and impos'd upon in many *Seeming-Miracles* and *Wonders*; yet there are some Things wherein we may be *Certain*.

BUT further, the *Deists* acknowledge a *God*, of an *Almighty Power*, who made all Things;

YET they would put it out of his *Power* to make any *Revelation* of his *Will* to *Mankind*. For if we cannot be *certain* of any *Miracle*, How should we know when *God* sent any thing *Extraordinary* to us?

NAY, How should we know the *ordinary Power* of *Nature*, if we know not what *exceeded* it? If we know not what is *Natural*, how do we know there is such a thing as *Nature*? That all is not *Supernatural*, all *Miracles*, and so *disputable*, till we come to

to downright *Scepticism*, and doubt the *Certainty* of our *outward Senses*, whether we *See, Hear, or Feel*; or all be not a *miraculous Illusion*!

WHICH, because I know the *Deists* are not inclin'd to do, therefore I will return to pursue my *Argument* upon the *conviction* of our *outward Senses*; desiring only this, That they wou'd allow the *Senses* of other Men to be as *Certain* as their own: Which they cannot refuse, since without this, they can have no *Certainty* of their own.

XI. THEREFORE, from what has been said, the Cause is summ'd up shortly in this, That tho' we cannot *see* what was done before our Time, yet by the *Marks* which I have laid down concerning the *certainty* of *Matters of Fact* done before our Time, we may be as much assur'd of the *Truth* of 'em, as if we saw them with our *Eyes*; because whatever *Matter of Fact* has all the four *Marks* before-mentioned, cou'd never have been *Invented* and *Receiv'd*, but upon the *Conviction* of the *outward Senses* of all those who did *Receive* it, as before is demonstrated. And therefore this Topic which I have chosen, does stand upon the *Conviction* even of Men's *outward Senses*. And since you have confin'd me to *one* Topic, I have not insisted upon the other, which I have only nam'd.

XII. And now it lies upon the *Deists*, if they wou'd appear as Men of *Reason*, to shew some *Matter of Fact* of former Ages, which they allow to be *true*, that has greater *Evidence* of its *Truth*, than the *Matters of Fact* of *Moses* and of *Christ*: Otherwise they cannot, with any shew of *Reason*, reject the one, and yet admit of the other.

BUT, I have given them greater Latitude than this; for I have shewn such *Marks* of the *Truth* of the *Matters of Fact* of *Moses* and of *Christ*, as no other *Matters of Fact* of those Times, however *true*,
E
have,

have, but these only: And I put it upon them to shew any *Forgery* that has *All* these *Marks*.

THIS is a short *Issue*. Keep them close to this. This determines the *Cause* all at once.

LET them produce their *Apollonius Tyanæus*, whose *Life* was put into *English* by the execrable * *Charles Blount*, and compar'd with all the *Wit* and *Malice* he was Master of, to the *Life* and *Miracles* of our Blessed *Saviour*.

LET them take Aid from all the *Legends* in the Church of *Rome*, those *Pious Cheats*, the sorest *Disgraces* of *Christianity*; and which have bid the fairest of any one Contrivance, to overturn the *Certainty* of the *Miracles* of *Christ*, and his *Apostles*, and whole *Truth* of the *Gospel*, by putting them all upon the same *Foot*; at least, they are so understood by the generality of their *Devotees*, tho' *Disown'd* and *Laugh'd at* by the *Learn'd*, and Men of *Sense* among them.

LET them Pick and Chuse the most probable of all the *Fables* of the *Heathen Deities*, and see if they can find in any of these, the *Four Marks* before-mention'd.

OTHERWISE let them submit to the *Irrefragable Certainty* of the *Christian Religion*.

XIII. But, if, notwithstanding of all that is said, the *Deists* will still contend, That all this is but *Priest-Craft*, the *Invention* of *Priests*, for their own Profit,

* The Hand of that Scornor, which durst write such outrageous Blasphemy against his Maker, the Divine Vengeance has made his own Executioner. Which I wou'd not have mention'd (because the like Judgment has befall'n others) but that the Theistical Club, have set this up as a Principle; and printed a Vindication of this same Blount, for murdering of himself, by way of Justification of Self-murder. Which some of them have since, as well as formerly, horribly practis'd upon themselves. Therefore this is no common Judgment to which they are delivered, but a visible Mark set upon them, to shew how far God has forsaken them; and as a Caution to all Christians, to beware of them, and not to come near the Tents of these wicked Men, lest they perish in their Destruction, both of Soul and Body.

Profit, &c. then they will give us an *Idea* of *Priests*, far different from what they intend: For then, we must look upon these *Priests*, not only as the *Cunningest* and *Wiseest* of *Mankind*, but we shall be tempted to adore them as *Deities*, who have such Power, as to impose, at their pleasure, upon the Senses of *Mankind* to make them believe, that they had practis'd such *Publick Institutions*, Enacted them by *Laws*, Taught them to their *Children*, &c. when they had never done any of these Things, or ever so much as heard of them before: And then, upon the Credit of their Believing that they had done such Things as they never did, to make them further Believe, upon the same Foundation, whatever they pleas'd to impose upon them, as to Former Ages: I say, such a Power as this, must exceed all that is *Human*; and, consequently, make us rank these *Priests* far above the Condition of *Mortals*.

2. *NAY*, this were to make them out-do all that has ever been related of the *Infernal Powers*: For though their *Leger-demain* has extended to deceive some unwary Beholders; and their Power of Working some *seeming* Miracles has been great, yet it never reach'd, nor ever was suppos'd to reach so far, as to deceive the Senses of all *Mankind*, in Matters of such *Publick* and *Notorious* Nature as those of which we now speak, to make them believe, that they had enacted *Laws* for such *publick Observances*, continually Practis'd them, Taught them to their *Children*, and had been Instructed in them themselves from their *Childhood*, if they had never Enacted, Practis'd, Taught, or been Taught such Things.

3. *AND* as this exceeds all the *Power* of *Hell* and *Devils*, so is it more than ever *God Almighty* has done since the Foundation of the World. None of the *Miracles* that He has shewn, or *Belief* which He has requir'd to any thing that He has *Reveal'd*, has ever contradicted the *outward Senses* of any one Man in the World, much less of

all *Mankind* together. For *Miracles* being Appeals to our *outward Senses*, if they shou'd overthrow the *Certainty* of our *outward Senses*, must destroy, with it, all their own *Certainty*, as to us; since we have no other way to judge of a *Miracle* exhibited to our *Senses*, than upon the Supposition of the *Certainty* of our *Senses*, upon which we give credit to a *Miracle*, that is shewn to our *Senses*.

4. THIS, by the way, is a yet unanswer'd Argument against the *Miracle* of *Transubstantiation*, and shews the Weakness of the Defence which the *Church of Rome* offers for it, (from whom the *Soci-nians* have lick'd it up, and, of late, have Glory'd much in it amongst us,) That the Doctrines of the *Trinity* or *Incarnation* contain as great seeming Absurdities as that of *Transubstantiation*. For I wou'd ask, Which of our *Senses* it is which the Doctrines of the *Trinity* or *Incarnation* do contradict? Is it our *Seeing*, *Hearing*, *Feeling*, *Taste*, or *Smell*? whereas *Transubstantiation* do's contradict all of these. Therefore the *Comparison* is exceeding short, and out of purpose. But to Return.

IF the *Christian Religion* be a Cheat, and nothing else but the *Invention* of *Priests*; and carry'd on by their *Craft*, it makes their *Power* and *Wisdom* greater, than that of *Men*, *Angels*, or *Devils*; and more than God Himself ever yet shew'd or express'd, to *Deceive* and *Impose* upon the *Senses* of *Mankind*, in such *Publick* and *Notorious Matters* of *Fact*.

XIV. AND this *Miracle*, which the *Deists* must run into to avoid these recorded of *Moses* and *Christ*, is much greater, and more astonishing than all the *Scriptures* tell of *Them*.

So that these *Men*, who laugh at all *Miracles*, are now oblig'd to account for the greatest of all, how the *Senses* of *Mankind* cou'd be impos'd upon in such *publick Matters* of *Fact*.

AND how then can they make the *Priests* the most

most contemptible of all *Mankind*, since they make *Them* the sole *Authors* of this the greatest of *Miracles*.

XV. AND since the *Deists*, (these Men of *Sense* and *Reason*) have so vile and mean an *Idea* of the *Priests* of all *Religions*, why do they not recover the *World* out of the *Possession* and *Government* of such *Blockheads*? Why do they suffer *Kings* and *States* to be led by *Them*; to establish their *Deceits* by *Laws*, and inflict *Penalties* upon the *Opposers* of them? Let the *Deists* try their *Hands*; they have been trying, and are now busie about it. And free *Liberty* they have. Yet have they not prevail'd, nor ever yet did prevail in any *Civiliz'd* or *Generous* Nation. And tho' they have some *Inroads* among the *Hotentots*, and some other the most *Brutal* Part of *Mankind*, yet are they still exploded, and *Priests* have and do prevail against them, among not only the *Greatest*, but *Best* Part of the *World*, and the most *Glorious* for *Arts*, *Learning*, and *War*.

XVI. FOR as the *Devil* do's ape *God*, in His *Institutions* of *Religion*; His *Feasts*, *Sacrifices*, &c. so likewise in His *Priests*, without whom, no *Religion*, whether *True* or *False*, can stand. *False* Religion is but a *Corruption* of the *True*. The *True* was before it; though it be follow'd close upon the *Heels*.

THE *Revelation* made to *Moses*, is elder than any *History* extant in the *Heathen* *World*. The *Heathens*, in Imitation of him, pretended, likewise to their *Revelations*: But I have given those *Marks* which distinguish them from the *True*: None of them have those *Four* *Marks* before-mentioned.

NOW the *Deists* think all *Revelations* to be equally *Pretended*, and a *Cheat*; and the *Priests* of all *Religions* to be the same *Contrivers* and *Juglers*; and therefore they proclaim *War* equally against all, and are equally engag'd to bear the *Brunt* of all.

AND if the Contest be only betwixt the *Deists* and the *Priests*, which of them are the Men of the greatest *Parts* and *Sense*, let the *Effects* determine it; and let the *Deists* yield the *Victory* to their *Conquerors*, who by their own Confession, carry all the World before them.

XVII. IF the *Deists* say, That this is because all the World are *Blockheads*, as well as those *Priests* who govern them; that all are *Blockheads*, except the *Deists*, who vote themselves only to be Men of *Sense*. This, (besides the Modesty of it) will spoil their great and beloved *Topic*, in behalf of what they call *Natural Religion*, against the *Reveal'd*, viz. appealing to the *Common Reason* of *Mankind*: This they set up against *Revelation*; think this to be sufficient for all the uses of Men, here, or hereafter, (if there be any after *State*) and therefore that there is no use of *Revelation*: This *Common Reason* they advance as *Infallible*, at least, as the *surest* Guide, yet now cry out upon it, when it turns against them; when this *Common Reason* runs after *Revelation*, (as it always has done) then *Common Reason* is a *Beast*, and we must look for *Reason*, not from the *Common Sentiments* of *Mankind*, but only among the *Beaux*, the *Deists*.

XVIII. THEREFORE, if the *Deists* would avoid the *Mortification*, (which will be very uneasy to them) to yield and submit to be *Subdu'd* and *Hew'd* down before the *Priests*, whom of all *Mankind* they *Hate* and *Despise*; if they would avoid this, let 'em confess, as the Truth is, That *Religion* is no *Invention* of *Priests*, but of *Divine* Original: That *Priests* were *Instituted* by the same *Author* of *Religion*; and that their *Order* is a *Perpetual* and *Living Monument* of the *Matters of Fact* of their *Religion*, *Instituted* from the *Time* that such *Matters of Fact* were said to be done, as the *Levites* from *Moses*; the

the *Apostles*, and succeeding *Clergy*, from *Christ*, to this Day. That no *Heathen Priests* can say the same: They were not appointed by the *Gods* whom they served, but by others in after-Ages: They cannot stand the *Test* of the *Four Rules* before-mentioned, which the *Christian Priests* can do, and they only. Now the *Christian Priesthood*, as Instituted by *Christ* Himself, and continu'd by *Succession* to this Day, being as *Impregnable* and *Flagrant* a *Testimony* to the Truth of the *Matters of Fact* of *Christ*, as the *Sacraments*, or any other *Publick Institutions*: Besides that, if the *Priesthood* were taken away, the *Sacraments*, and other *Publick Institutions*, which are administered by their Hands, must fall with them: Therefore the *Devil* has been most busie, and bent his greatest Force, in all Ages, against the *Priesthood*, knowing, that if *That* goes down, *All* go's with it.

XIX. WITH the *Deists*, in this Cause, are join'd the *Quakers*, and other of our *Dissenters*, who throw off the *Succession* of our *Priesthood*, (by which only it can be demonstrated) together with the *Sacraments* and *publick Festivals*. And if the *Devil* cou'd have prevail'd to have these dropt, the *Christian Religion* would lose the most *Undeniable* and *Demonstrative* Proof for the Truth of the *Matter of Fact* of our *Saviour*, upon which the Truth of his *Doctrine* do's depend. Therefore we may see the *Artifice* and *Malice* of the *Devil*, in all these Attempts. And let those wretched *Instruments*, whom he *Ignorantly* (and some by a misguided *Zeal*) has deluded thus to undermine *Christianity*, now at last look back and see the *Snare* in which they have been taken: For if they had prevail'd, or ever should, *Christianity* dies with them. At least, it will be render'd *precarious*, as a thing of which no *Certain* Proof can be given. Therefore let those of them, who have any *Zeal* for the Truth, bless God that they have not

prevail'd; and quickly leave them; and let all others be aware of them.

AND let us Consider and Honour the *Priesthood*, *Sacraments*, and other *Publick Institutions* of *Christ*, not only as *Means* of *Grace*, and *Helps* to *Devotion*, but as the *Great Evidences* of the *Christian Religion*.

SUCH *Evidences* as no *pretended Revelation* ever had, or can have. Such as do plainly distinguish it from all foolish *Legends* and *Impostures* whatsoever.

XX. AND now, last of all, if one Word of Advice would not be lost, upon Men who think so unmeasurably of themselves, as the *Deists*, you may represent to them, what a Condition they are in, who spend that *Life* and *Sense*, which God has given them, in *Ridiculing* the *Greatest* of His *Blessings*, His *Revelations* of *Christ*, and by *Christ*, to *Redeem* those from *Eternal Misery*, who shall *Believe* in Him, and *Obeys* His *Laws*. And that God, in His wonderful *Mercy* and *Wisdom*, has so *Guarded* His *Revelations*, as that it is past the *Power* of *Men* or *Devils* to *Counterfeit*: And that there is no *Denying* of them, unless we will be so absurd, as to deny not only the *Reason*, but the *Certainty* of the *outward Senses*, not only of *One*, or *Two*, or *Three*, but of *Mankind* in *General*. That this Case is so very *Plain*, that nothing but want of *Thought* can hinder any to discover it. That they must yield it to be so *Plain*, unless they can shew some *Forgery*, which has all the *Four Marks*, before set down. But if they cannot do this, they must quit their Cause, and yield a *Happy Victory* over themselves: Or else sit down under all that *Ignominy*, with which they have loaded the *Priests*, of being, not only the most *Pernicious*, but (what will *Gall* them more) the most *Inconsiderate*, and *Inconsiderable* of *Mankind*.

THERE

THEREFORE, let them not think it an Undervaluing of their *Worthiness*, that their whole Cause is comprised within so narrow a Compass: And no more Time bestow'd upon it than it is worth.

BUT let them, rather, Reflect, how far they have been all this Time from *Christianity*; whose *Rudiments* they are yet to learn! How far from the Way of *Salvation*! How far the Race of their Lives is run, before they have set one Step in the Road to Heaven. And therefore, how much Diligence they ought to use, to redeem all that Time they have lost, lest they lose themselves for ever; and be convinc'd, by a dreadful Experience, when it is too late, That the *Gospel* is a Truth, and of the last Consequence.

F I N I S.



A

Discourse concerning EPISCOPACY.

I SHALL begin this *Discourse* with a *solemn Appeal* to every *Person*, who has read the foregoing *short Method* with the *Deists*, whether it is not absolutely necessary, that a lineal and uninterrupted *Succession* of the *Ministers* of JESUS CHRIST should be preserved, lest *Christianity*, our holy Religion should

should be render'd precarious, as a Thing of which no certain Proof can be given?

I AM sure there is no Man in his Wits but will say, *it is absolutely necessary.*

I wou'd not be so understood, as if I meant that every One who has read the short Method, is fully convinc'd that the *Succession* must be derived in the *Bishops*: But this I mean; that there is no Man (without he has a *Design* to sap and undermine the very *Foundations* of *Christianity*) but will, nay, he must own, that it is of *absolute Necessity*, that there should be an *uninterrupted Succession* of the * *Priesthood* preserved: And for this reason, because shou'd the *Succession* be broken and interrupted, the *Christian Religion* would lose the most *undeniable* and *demonstrative* Proof for the Truth of the Matter of Fact of our *Saviour*, upon which the Truth of his *Doctrine* do's depend. For the Proof and Illustration of which I refer to the *Short Method*.

AND 2dly, I ask those Persons who have perus'd what Mr. *Pemberton* (a famous dissenting Teacher in *New-England*, now deceas'd) has said in his Discourse of *Ordination by Presbyters*, whether he is not satisfy'd that, It is most evident that those who are to serve God in the Ministry of his Gospel, *must be duely authoriz'd to discharge the Office of a Gospel Minister?* And that, God has not left this Work of the Ministry in common, but within a sacred Inclosure, which can't be broke over without the Efforts of a *Corah-like* Spirit? As that great Man hath excellently express'd it. But inasmuch as this *Treatise* may fall into the Hands of some, who have not seen what Mr. *Pemberton* has written, I shall

* Whether this *Succession* must be preserv'd only in the *Bishops*, or whether it may not be deriv'd thro' the *Presbyters*, or whether *Bishops* and *Presbyters* are not the same, I do not now say: But what I contend for as necessary, is an *uninterrupted Succession* of *Gospel Ministers*: And he that denies such a *Succession* of the Ministry to be necessary, is an Enemy to *Christianity*.

shall say something at this time by way of Advice to those Persons, who madly think that there is nothing at all necessary to constitute a Gospel Minister, but (what they fondly call) a good stock of Gifts. To these mad *Enthusiasts*, these heady *Impostors*, whose pretended Gifts are in nothing extraordinary, except in a furious Zeal without Knowledge, and a Volubility of Tongue, which proceeds from a Habit of Speaking without Thinking; and an Assurance that is never out of Countenance; for ten Thousand *Blunders*, which wou'd dash and confound any Man of Sense, or Modesty, or that consider'd the presence of God, in which he spoke: To these Men I say I shall speak something concerning the Qualifications requisite in a Gospel Minister.

THESE Qualifications are of two sorts, *Personal* or *Sacerdotal*.

1st. *Personal*. The Holiness of the Administrator. And, tho' this is a great Qualification to fit and prepare a Man for such an holy Administration, yet this alone does not sufficiently qualify any Man to take upon him such an Administration.

BUT there is moreover requir'd, 2^{dly}, a *Sacerdotal* Qualification; that is, an outward Commission to authorise a Man to execute any sacerdotal, or ministerial Act of Religion. For, This Honour no Man taketh unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron; Heb. v. 4. So also CHRIST glorified not himself to be made an High-Priest; but He that said unto him, Thou art my Son; — Thou art a Priest, &c.

ACCORDINGLY we find, that Christ did not take upon him the Office of a Preacher, till after that outward Commission given to Him by a Voice from Heaven, at his Baptism; for it is written, Mat. iv. 17. From that Time Jesus began to preach, THEN He began; and He was then about thirty Years of Age. Luke iii. 23. Now no Man can doubt of Christ's Qualifications, before that Time, as to Holiness,

ness, Sufficiency, and all personal Endowments. And if all these were not sufficient to Christ himself, without an outward Commission, what Man can pretend to it upon the Account of any personal Excellencies in himself, without an outward Commission?

III. AND, as *Christ* was outwardly Commissioned by *his Father*, so did not He leave it to his Disciples, every one's Opinion of his own Sufficiency, to thrust himself into the *Vineyard*, but chose twelve *Apostles* by Name; and seventy others of an inferior Order, whom he sent to *preach*.

IV. AND, as *Christ* gave outward Commissions while he was upon the Earth, so we find that his *Apostles* did proceed in the same Method, after his Ascension. *Acts* xiv. 23. *They ordained them Elders in every Church.*

LET this suffice to shew what *sacred Mounds* are thrown up by *Divine Appointment*, a round this *holy Calling*; And tho' much more might be offer'd, I believe this will be sufficient to affright the *Headstrong*, and to keep him from seizing with his *sacrilegious Hands* upon the *sacred Office*.

V. BUT had they, who were thus ordained by the *Apostles*, Power to Ordain others? Yea, *Tit.* i. 5. *For this Cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst — ordain Elders in every City.* 1 *Tim.* v. 22. *Lay Hands suddenly on no Man, &c.* *Clement* in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, writing concerning the Schism which was risen up amongst them, says Parag. 44. *That the Apostles fore-knowing there would be Contests concerning the Episcopal Name (or Office) did themselves appoint the Persons:* And not only so, lest that might be said to be of Force only during their Time. But that they afterwards established an Order how, when those whom they had ordained should die; others, fit and approved Men, should succeed them in their Ministry. Parag. 43. *That they who were in-*
trusted

trusted with this Work by God, in Christ, did constitute these Offices.

BUT this Matter depends not upon the Testimony of him, or many more that might be produced. It is such a publick Matter of Fact, that I might as well go about to quote particular Authors, to prove that there were Emperors in *Rome*, as that the Ministers of the *Church of Christ* were ordained to *succeed* one another, and that they did so *succeed*.

BUT here is a Dispute, whether this *Succession* was preserved in the Order of *Bishops* or *Presbyters*? Or whether both are not the same?

TO which I answer, that this *Succession* from the *Apostles* is preserv'd and deriv'd only in the *Bishops*: As the Continuance of any *Society*, is deduc'd only in the *Succession* of the chief *Governors* of the *Society*, not of the inferior *Officers*. Thus in *Kingdoms*, we reckon by the *Succession* of the *Kings*, not of *Sherriffs* or *Constables*; and in *Corporations* by the *Succession* of the *Mayors*, or other chief *Officers*; not of the inferior *Bailiffs* or *Serjeants*: So the *Succession* of the *Churches* is computed in the *Succession* of the *Bishops*, who are the chief *Governors* of the *Churches*, and not of *Presbyters*, who are but inferior *Officers* under the *Bishops*.

BUT this you will say is *gratis dictum*. Here is no Proof. Therefore to proceed. I answer that in this, the Matter of Fact is as clear and evident, as the *Successions* of any *Kings* or *Corporations* in the *World*.

TO begin with the *Apostles*, we find not only that they constituted *Timothy* Bishop of *Ephesus*, and *Titus* of *Crete*, as in the Subscriptions of *St. Paul's* Epistles to them: But, in *Eusebius* and other *Ecclesiastical Historians*, you have the *Bishops* nam'd who were constituted by the *Apostles* themselves, over the then famous *Churches* of *Jerusalem*, *Antioch*,
Rome

Rome and Alexandria, and many other Churches; and the Succession of them down all along.

St. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, was Disciple to St. John the Apostle; and St. Irenæus, who was Disciple to St. Polycarp, was constituted Bishop of Lyons in France.

AND so it was in all other Churches, throughout the whole World, wherever Christianity was planted, *Episcopacy* was every where Established, without one Exception, as is evident from all their Records.

IT was so with *England*, whither it is generally suppos'd, and with very good Grounds, that *St. Paul* first brought the *Christian Faith*. *Clemens Romanus*, who was a Companion of *St. Paul*, in his first *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, Paragr. 5. says, that *St. Paul* went preaching the Gospel even to the utmost Bounds of the West; ἐν τῇ τέλει τῆς Δύσεως, by which Term *Britain* was then understood. And *Theodoret* expressly names the *Britains* among the Nations converted by the *Apostles*. (Tom. 4. Sermon. 9. p. 610.) And *Eusebius* in his *Evangelical Demonstration*, (L. 3. c. 7. p. 113.) names likewise the *Britains* as then converted.

BUT whether *St. Paul*, or, as some conjecture, *Joseph of Arimathea*, or any other *Apostolical Person* was the first who preached *Christ* in *England*, it matters not, as to our present Purpose; who enquire only concerning *Episcopacy*; and it is certain by all our Histories, that as far up as they give us any Account of *Christianity* in this Island, they tell us likewise of *Bishops*; and the Succession of the Church of *England* has been deduc'd in the Succession of *Bishops*, and not of *Presbyters*. And particularly in the *Diocefs* of *London*, which was the first *Arch-Episcopal Seat*, before *Augustin* the Monk came hither, after which it was establish'd in *Canterbury*. And the *Saxon Writers* have transmitted the Succession of their *Bishops* in *Canterbury*, *Rocheſter*, *London*, &c.

AND

AND in Countries so remote and barbarous as *Island* it self we find the same care taken; *Ara* or *Aras*, an *Islandish* Priest Sire-nam'd *Hinfrede* the Learned, who flourish'd in the eleventh Century, and was 25 Years old when *Christianity* was carry'd thither, in his Book of that Country written in *Islandish*, has transmitted to Posterity, not only the *Succeſſion*, but the *Genealogies* of the *Bishops* of *Skalholt* and *Hola* (the two Episcopal Sees of *Island*) as they ſucceeded one another in his Time. I mention this of *Island*, to ſhew that *Episcopacy* has extended it ſelf equally with *Christianity*, which was carry'd by it, into the remotest corners of the *Earth*; upon which account the *Bishops* of *Skalholt* and *Hola*, and their *Succeſſion*, are as remarkable Proofs of *Episcopacy*, tho' not ſo famous as the *Bishops* of *Canterbury* and *London*.

IF the *Presbyterians* will ſay (becauſe they have nothing left to ſay) that all *London* (for Example) was but one *Parish*; and that the *Presbyter* of every other *Parish* was as much a *Bishop* as the *Bishop* of *London*; becauſe the words *Επίσκοπος* and *Πρεσβύτερος*, *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are ſometimes uſ'd in the ſame Senſe; they may as well prove that *Chriſt* was but a *Deacon*, becauſe He is ſo call'd. Rom. xv. 8. *Διάκονος*, which we rightly tranſlate a *Minifter*: And *Bishop* ſignifies an *Overſeer*, and *Presbyter* an ancient Man, or elder Man; whence our Term of *Alderman*. And this is as good a Foundation to prove that the *Apoſtles* were *Aldermen*, in the City Acceptation of the Word; or that our *Aldermen* are all *Bishops* and *Apoſtles*, as to prove that *Presbyters* and *Bishops* are all one, from the childiſh Gingle of the Words.

IT wou'd be the ſame Thing, if one ſhou'd undertake to confront all Antiquity, and prove againſt all the *Hitories*, that the *Emperors* of *Rome* were no more than *Generals* of *Armies*, and that every *Roman General* was *Emperor* of *Rome*; becauſe he cou'd
find

find the Word *Imperator* sometimes apply'd to the *General* of an *Army*.

OR as if a *Common-wealth man* thou'd get up and say, that our former *Kings* were no more than our *Dukes* are now; because the *Stile* of *Grace*, which is now given to *Dukes*, was then given to *Kings*.

AND suppose that any One were put under the pittance of answering to such ridiculous Arguments; what Method wou'd He take, but to shew that the *Emperors* of *Rome*, and former *Kings* of *England*, had *Generals* of *Armies* and *Dukes* under them, and exercis'd Authority over them?

THEREFORE when we find it given in Charge to *Timothy*, the first *Bishop* of *Ephesus*, how He was to proceed against his *Presbyters*, when they transgressed; to sit in Judgment upon them, examine *Witnesses* against them, and pass *Censures* upon them, it is a most impertinent *Logomachy* to argue from the *Etymology* of the Words, that notwithstanding of all this, a *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are the same thing. Therefore that one Text 1. Tim. v. 19. is sufficient to silence that pitiful clamour of the *Pesbyterians*; our *English* reads it, against an *Elder*, which is the *Literal* Translation of the Word *Presbyter*, *ἐπὶ δύο ἢ τρεῖς μαρτυροῦντες* against a *PRESEYTER* receive not an *Accusation*, but before two or three *Witnesses*, and, them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. Now, upon the *Presbyterian* Hypothesis, we must say that *Timothy* had no *Authority* or *Jurisdiction* over that *Presbyter*, against whom He had power to receive *Accusations*, examine *Witnesses*, and pass *Censures* upon Him: And that such a *Presbyter* had the same *Authority* over *Timothy*, which is so extravagant and against common Sense, that I will not stay longer to confute it; and think this enough to have said concerning the *Presbyterian* Argument from the *Etymology* of the Words *Bishop* and *Presbyter*.

AND

AND this likewise confutes their other Pretence; which I have mention'd, that the ancient *Bishopricks* were only single and independent Congregations, or *Parishes*. This is a Topic they have taken up but of late, (being beaten from all their other Holds) and launched by Mr. *David Clerkson*, in a Book which He entitles *Primitive Episcopacy*; which has given Occasion to an excellent Answer, by Dr. *Henry Maurice*, call'd *A Defence of Diocesan Episcopacy*, which I suppose, has ended that Controversy, and hindred the World from being more troubled upon that Head. And their other little Shift, and as groundless, that the *Primitive Bishops* were no other than their *Moderators*, advanc'd more lately by *Gilb-Rule* the *Moderator* of the *General Assembly* in *Scotland*, has been as learnedly, and with great clearness of Reason, confuted by the worthy *J. S.* in his *Principles of the Cyprianic Age*.

BUT as I said, that Text, 1. Tim. v. 19. has made all these Pretences wholly useles to the *Presbyterians*: For supposing their most notorious false Supposition, as if the *Bishopricks* of *Jerusalem*, *Rome*, *Alexandria*, or *London*, consisted but of one single Congregation, and that such *Bishops* had no *Presbyters* under them; but that all *Presbyters* were equally *Bishops*; I say supposing this, then it must follow from what we read of *Timothy*, that one *Bishop* or *Presbyter* had Jurisdiction over other *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, which will destroy the *Presbyterian Claim* of *Parity*, as much as their Confession to the Truth, and plain Matter of Fact, that *Bishops* had *Presbyters* under their Jurisdiction; and that they were distinct Orders: Notwithstanding that a *Bishop* may be called Διάκονος a *Deacon*, or *Minister of Christ*; and likewise Πρεσβύτερος, an *Elder* or grave Man, which is a Term of Magistracy and Dignity, and is not ty'd to Age. And a *Presbyter* may likewise, in a sound Sense be called a *Bishop*, that is, an *Overseer* or *Shepherd*, which He truly is over his particular

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Flock, without denying at all his Dependance upon His *Bishop* and *Overseer*.

As under the Term of *Priest*, the *High-Priest* was included, without destroying his *Supremacy*, over the other *Priests*. Against which *Supremacy* KORAHA and his *Presbyters*, or inferiour *Priests* arose.

AND if the *Presbyterians* will take his Word, whom, of all the *Fathers*, they most admire, and quote often on their side, that is, St. *Jerom*; he will tell them, in that very *Epist.* (*ad Evagr.*) which they boast favours them so much, That what *Aaron* and his *Sons*, and the *Levites* were in the *Temple*, that same are *Bishop*, *Presbyter*, and *Deacon* in the *Church*.

AND long before Him, *Clemens Romanus*, who was *Bishop* of *Rome*, who convers'd with the *Apostles*, and learn'd the *Christian Faith* from their Mouths; He I say, in his 1. *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, makes frequent Allusion to the *Episcopacy* of the *Levitical Priesthood*, and argues from thence to that of the *Christian Church*.

THUS Parag. 40 To the *High-Priest* (says he) were allotted his proper Offices, to the *Priests*, their proper Place was assign'd; and to the *Levites* their Services were appointed; and the *Lay-men* were restrain'd within the Precepts to *Lay-men*. And Paragr. 42. He applies that Scripture, *Isa. lx. 17.* to the Officers of the *Christian Church*, and renders it thus; I will constitute their *Bishops* in righteousness, and their *Ministers* (or *Deacons*) in Faith. The *Greek Translation* of the *LXX* has it thus. I will give Thee *Rulers* (or *Princes*) in Peace; and thy *Bishops* in Righteousness.

IT was the frequent Method of those *Primitive Fathers* to Reason thus from the Parallel 'twixt the *Law* and the *Gospel*, the one being an exact Type of the other, and therefore being fulfill'd in the other. And in this they follow'd the Example of *Christ*, and the *Apostles* who argu'd in the same Manner,

Manner, as you may see *Matth. v.* and *I. Cor. x.* the whole *Epistle to the Hebrews*, and in many other Places of the *New-Testament*.

Now the *Presbyterians* are desir'd to shew any one Disparity betwixt their Case and the Case of *Korah*, who was a Priest of the second Order, that is, a *Presbyter*; and withdrew his Obedience from the *High-Priest* with other mutinous *Levites*: For there was no Matter of *Doctrine*, or *Worship* betwixt them and *Aaron*, nor any other Dispute, but that of *Church Government*. And, by the Parallel betwixt the *Old Testament* and the *New*, *Korah* was a *Presbyterian*, who rose up against the *Episcopacy* of *Aaron*. But this Case is brought yet nearer home; for we are told (*Jude 11.*) of those under the Gospel, who perish in the Gain saying of *Korah*: And in the *Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians* before quoted, *Paragraph, 43.* He plainly applies this Case of *Korah*, to the State of the *Christian Church*, shewing at large, that as *Moses*, by the Command of God, determin'd the Pretensions of the twelve Tribes to the Glory of the *Priesthood*, by the miraculous Budding of *Aaron's Rod*, which was after the *Schism* and *Punishment* of *Korah* and his Company. So likewise, He says, the *Apostles* Foreknowing, by *Christ*; that Dissentions wou'd arise also in the *Christian Church* by various Pretenders to the *Evangelical Priest-hood*, did settle and establish, not only the Persons themselves; but gave *Rules* and *Orders* for continuing the *Succeſſion* after their Deaths, as I have before quoted his Words. So that it is plain from hence, That the *Evangelical Priesthood*, is as positively, and certainly establish'd, and determin'd, in the *Succeſſion* of *Ecclesiastical Ordination*, as the *Levitical* was, in the *Succeſſion* of *Aaron*, and consequently, that the *Rebellion* of *Presbyters* from under the Government of their *Bishops*, is the same Case as the *Rebellion* (for so it is call'd, *Numb. xvii. 10.*) of *Korah* and his *Levites*, against *Aaron*, who

had as good a Pretence against Him from the Word *Levite*, which was common to the whole *Tribe*, as the *Presbyterians* have against *Bishops*, from the Name *Bishop* and *Presbyter*, being used sometimes promiscuously, and apply'd to the *Clergy* in general; which is a Term that includes all the Orders of the Church, as *Levite* did among the *Jews*.

BUT, to leave the fruitless Contest about *Words*, let this Matter be determin'd, as other Matters of Fact are.

IF I pretend to succeed any Man in an *Honour* or *Estate*, I must name him who had such an *Estate* or *Honour* before me, and the Man who had it before him; and who had it before him; and so up all the way to him who first had it; and from whom all the rest do derive; and how it was lawfully deduc'd from one to another.

THIS the *Bishops* have done, as I have shewn, and can name all the Way backward, as far as History goes, from the present *Bishop* of *London*, (for Example) to the first Plantation of *Christianity* in this Kingdom: So from the present *Bishop* of *Lyons* in *France*, up to *Irenaus*, the Disciple of *St. Polycarp*, who was the *Bishop* of *Smyrna* (one of the Angels mention'd in the *Revelations*) and the Disciple to the Holy Apostle *John*, who wrote the *Apocalyps*, as before is told. The Records are yet more certain in the great *Bishopricks* of *Rome*, *Antioch*, *Alexandria*, and others, while they lasted in the World. And tho' the Records may not be extant of every small *Bishoprick*, which was less taken Notice of; as the Names of many *Kings* are lost in obscure Nations; of Many *Mayors* or *Sheriffs*, who notwithstanding have as certainly succeeded one another, as where the Records are preserv'd. I say, tho' every *Bishop* in the World cannot tell the Names of all his Predecessors up to the *Apostles*, yet their Succession is certain: And in most *Christian* Nations there are *Bishops* who can do it, which is a sufficient Proof for
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the rest, all standing upon the same Bottom, and being deriv'd in the same Manner.

BUT, as I said before, we have as clear a *Succession* of our *Bishops* as of our *Kings*: And to those who demand a *List* of them, I answer, that *Stow's Survey of London*, will give them the Names of all the *Bishops of London*, from that Time upwards, as far as our History reaches, and from *Stow* to this present *Bishop of London*, they are well known. And if they will go Abroad, they may see in *Eusebius*, the *Succession* of the great *Bishopricks*. And there is a *List* of them in the end of *Dr. Cave's Lives of the Fathers*.

Now, to ballance this, it is desir'd, that the *Presbyterians* wou'd shew the *Succession* of any one *Presbyter* in the World who was not likewise a *Bishop*, in our Acceptation of the Word, in the like manner from the *Apostles*.

TILL when, their small *Criticisms* upon the Words, *Bishop* and *Presbyter*, is as poor a Plea, as if I should pretend to be *Heir* to an Estate from the *likeness* of my *Name* to *Somebody's* who once had it.

AND here I cannot choose but apply the Complaint of our Saviour, *John v. 43*. If any come in the Name of *Christ*, that is, by a Commission from him, deriv'd down all the Way by *regular Ordination*, him ye will not receive: Nay, tho' he be otherwise a Man without Exception, either as to his *Life* and *Conversation*, or as to his *Gifts* and *Sufficiency* for the *Ministry*; ye, (I mean many) make this his *Commission* an Objection against him: For this Reason alone you will not accept him. But if another come in *his own Name*, that is, without any *Commission*, but what he has from himself; his *own Opinion* of his *own Worthiness*; giving out that *himself is some great one*, (*Acts viii. 9.*) him ye will receive, and follow and admire; heaping to your selves *Teachers*, having itching Ears, as it was prophecy'd of these (and such-like) most degenerate Times, *2 Tim. iv. 3.*

A N D now, having said thus much as to the *Succession* from the *Apostles*, shewing that it is only deriv'd in the Bishops, and having put the *Presbyterians* to prove their *Succession* in the Form of *Presbytery*, which they can never do; because, as I have said before, the *Chronology* of the Church do's not compute from the *Succession* of the *Presbyters*, but only of the Bishops, as being the *chief Governors* of the Church. And therefore, tho' in many Bishopricks, the *Roll* of their Bishops is preserv'd from the Apostles to this Day; yet there is not one bare *Presbyter*, that is, the Minister of a Parish, and no more, no, not in all the World, who can give a *Roll* of his Predecessors, in that Parish, half way to the Apostles, or near it: For, from the first Plantation of Christianity, the Church was divided into Bishopricks; this was necessary for the Government of the Church: But it was not so early subdivided into Parishes. The *Presbyters* at first attending upon the Bishop, were sent out by him, to such Places, and for such Time as he thought fit; and returning, gave Account of their Stewardships, or were visited, and changed by him, as he saw Cause: And therefore tho' one might come after another, in the Place where He had ministered before; yet they cou'd not properly be said to succeed one another; if they cou'd, pray give us an uninterrupted *Succession* of any one *Presbyter* in the whole World, from the Apostles to this Day.

I have been thus long upon the *Presbyterians*, because they only of all our *Dissenters*, have any pretence to *Succession*. And what I have said as to them, must operate more strongly against our later *Independent*, *Baptists*, &c. who have not the Face to pretend to *Succession*, but set up meerly upon their own pretended Gifts.

B U T, lest the *Independent* or *Baptist*, shou'd pretend in Defence of themselves, to a *Succession* from the Apostles, (it being demonstrated in the *short Method*,

thod, that it is necessary that the *Succession* shou'd be preserv'd uninterrupted, or else Christianity will be render'd precarious;) and lest further, they should pretend that their *Ordinations* are *regular*, and that they are sent by God; (it being necessary for them to affirm this, because the learned Mr. *Pemberton* has made it so plain, that no one must minister in holy Things, but those whom God has appointed, and that Appointment is by Imposition of Hands; and no one can ordain or impose Hands, but those, and *only* those whom Christ has *authoriz'd* so to do.) I say, lest they shou'd pretend to both of these, that is, *Succession* from the Apostles and lawful *Ordination*, I will here shew (to undeceive the poor deluded People in this Country, and in *New England*, &c.) I say, I will now shew where some of them are absolutely cut off from both: For, if we shou'd trace either the *Independent*, or *Baptist*, up to those who first sent them, before we cou'd arrive to one hundred Years from this Date backwards, we shou'd find some of them ordain'd by *Lay Brethren*, and some without any *Ordination* at all. Therefore it is impossible that these Men can be in the *Succession*, or that they can be sent (in the ordinary Way I mean) by God; because the Scripture says expressly, *how shall they preach without they are sent*: And in another Place, *no Man taketh this Honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron*. And how that was, shall be shewn in the sequel of this *Discourse*.

AND to shew you, that I don't speak without Book as to their being ordain'd by *Lay-Men*, (tho' I have particular Instances of the Matter of Fact) I will shew what the *Ecclesiastical Laws* of the *Congregations* in *New England*, say concerning it.

IN their *Platform of Church-Discipline*, pag. 23 and 24. they allow *Lay-men* to ordain. Pag. 23. §. 3. 'In such Churches where there are Elders, (that is, Gospel Ministers) *Imposition of Hands*,

‘ *in Ordination, is to be perform’d by those Elders,*
 ‘ *Pag. 24. §. 4. For such Churches where there are no*
 ‘ *Elders, (that is, Presbyters or Gospel Ministers) Im-*
 ‘ *position of Hands may be performed by some of the Bre-*
 ‘ *thren orderly chosen by the Church thereunto.*

As for the Reason which the Platform offers for the Brethren to impose Hands, it is founded upon a very gross Mistake, viz. That the People have an *inherent Right* to constitute Gospel Ministers; which they have not; for none but Jesus Christ can constitute Gospel Ministers, they are his *Embassadors*, and no one can appoint *Embassadors*, but HE whose *Embassadors* they are, as I shall shew more fully before I have done. As for that Expression in the Platform, viz. ‘ *In such Churches where there are no*

‘ *Elders*, it is so far from being a
 Numb. viii. just Parallel to the Case it quotes, that
 10. it is no Parallel at all; for at that very

time there were in the *Jewish Church* both *Moses* and *Aaron*. And further (by the by) I shall make this Remark upon ‘ *a Church without Elders*, that it is a flat Contradiction in Terms; for a Church is a Society, and as such must have Government, but it cannot have Government without Elders or Governours, which is the same Thing, and so meant in that very Place.

AND now, as I said before, having spoken thus much concerning Succession, I must be obliged to account for an Objection, which with some seems a mighty one, even enough to overthrow all that I have said concerning the Succession of our Bishops: And that is, the great Deluge and long Mid-night of Popery, which has, in old Time, darken’d this Nation.

WELL, — The Succession, of which I have been treating, was no Part of that Darknesh; and we have, by God’s Blessing, recover’d our selves, from that Darknesh. But that Darknesh was such, as, with some, to destroy the Episcopal Succession; because, as they say, such great Errors, especia-

especially that of *Idolatry*, does quite *un-Church* a People, and consequently must break their *Succeſſion*.

THIS, by the way, is a *Papiſt* Argument, tho' they that now make it, are not aware of it. For the *Church of Rome* argues thus, that *Idolatry* do's *un-Church*; and therefore, if ſhe was *Idolatrous* for ſo long a time, as we charge upon Her, it will follow, that for ſo many Ages, there was no *viſible Church*, at leaſt in theſe weſtern Parts of the World. And *Arianism*, (which is *Idolatry*) having broke in ſo many times upon the Church; if *Idolatry* did quite *un-Church*, and break the *Succeſſion*, there wou'd hardly be a *Chriſtian Church* left in the World. The Conſequence of which wou'd be as fatal to the *Romans*, and to the *DifferTERS* as to us: Therefore, let them look to that *Position*, which they have advanc'd againſt us, that *Idolatry* does *un-Church*.

BUT, that it does not *un Church*, I have this to offer againſt thoſe *Papiſts* and *DifferTERS* of all Sorts and Denominations, who make the Objection.

1^{ſt}. If it does quite *un-church*, then cou'd no *Chriſtian* be an *Idolater*; becauſe, by that, he wou'd *ipſo facto*, ceaſe to be a Member of the *Chriſtian Church*. But the *Scripture* does ſuppoſe that a *Chriſtian* may be an *Idolater*: Therefore *Idolatry* do's not *un-Church*: The *Minor* is prov'd, 1 Cor. v. 2. If any Man that is called a Brother (that is, a *Chriſtian*) be a *Fornicator*, or covetous, or an *Idolater* — Nay, Eph. v. 5. a covetous Man is called an *Idolater*: And Col. iii. v. Covetouſneſs is *Idolatry*. So that, by this Argument, Covetouſneſs do's *un-Church*. If it be ſaid, that Covetouſneſs is call'd *Idolatry* only by Alluſion, but that it is not *formal Idolatry*: I know no Ground for that Diſtinction. The *Scripture* calls it *Idolatry*, and makes no Diſtinction.

BUT 2^{dly}. In the firſt Text quoted, 1 Cor. v. 11. both Covetouſneſs and *Idolatry* are nam'd; ſo that, you have both *material* and *formal*, or what other ſort of *Idolatry* you pleaſe to fancy. I

I grant, that, in one Sense, *Idolatry* does *un-Church*; that is, while we continue in it, it renders us obnoxious to the *Wrath of God*, and forfeits our Title to the Promises which are made to the *Church* in the *Gospel*: But so does *Fornication*, *Covetousness*, and every other Sin, till we repent and return from it. But none of these Sins do so *un-church* us, as to exclude our returning to the Fold, by sincere *Repentance*; or to need a second *Baptism*, or Admission into the Church: Neither do's *Idolatry*. Do I then put *Idolatry* upon the *Level* with other common Sins? No, God forbid, far from it: Every Scab is not a *Leprosy*; yet a *Leper* is a *Man*, and may recover his Health. *Idolatry* is a fearful *Leprosy*; but it does not therefore quite *un Church*, nor throw us out of the Covenant: For, if it did, then wou'd not *Repentance* heal it; because *Repentance* is a great Part of the Covenant. And therefore, since none deny *Repentance* to an *Idolater*, it follows that he is not yet quite out of the Covenant. Some of the *Ancients* have deny'd *Repentance* to *Apostacy*, yet granted it to *Idolatry*; which shews, that they did not look upon *Idolatry* as an *absolute Apostacy*; for every Sin is an *Apostacy* in a limited Sense.

2dly. LET us, in this Disquisition, follow the Examples before mention'd, of the *Apostles* and most *Primitive Fathers*, to measure the *Christian Church* with its exact *Type*, the Church under the *Law*; which are not two Churches, but two *States* of the same Church; for it is the same Christian Church from the first Promise of Christ, *Gen. iii. 15.* to the End of the World. And therefore it is said, *Heb. iv. 2.* That the *Gospel* was preached unto *them* as well as unto *us*. And these two *States* of the Church, *before* and *after* Christ, do answer like a pair of *Indentures* to one another, the one being to an *Lot*, fulfilled in the other, *Matt. v. 18.* Now we find frequent Lapses to *Idolatry* in the Church of the *Jews*; yet did not this *un-church* them; no, nor deprive them of a competent Measure of God's Holy

Holy Spirit; as it is written, *Neb. ix. 18. 20. Tea, when they had made them a Molten Calf, and said, this is thy God — yet thou, in thy manifold Mercies forsookest them not — Thou gavest thy good Spirit to instruct them, &c.*

AND let it be here observ'd, that tho' God sent many Prophets to reprove the great *Wickedness* and *Idolatry*, as well of their *Priests* as *People*; yet none of these holy *Prophets* did separate Communion from the wicked *Priests*: They would not joyn in their *Idolatrous Worship*; but in all other Parts, they joyn'd with them; and set up no opposite *Priesthood* to them.

So little did the *Prophets* think that their *Idolatry* had either *un Church'd* them, or broke the *Succession* of their *Priests*; or that it was lawful for any, *how holy soever*, to usurp upon their *Priesthood*, and supply the Deficiencies of it to the People. And apply to this, what I have before shewn, in the words of *St. Clement*, whose Name is written in the *Book of Life*, That the *Evangelical Priesthood*, is as surely fixed, in the *Bishops* of the *Church*, and its *Succession* continu'd in those ordain'd by them, as the *Levitical Priesthood* was confirm'd by the Budding of *Aaron's Rod*, and to be continu'd in that *Tribe*.

AND here let our *Korabites*, of several Sizes, take a view of the Heinousness of their *Schism*; and let them not think their Crime to be nothing, because they have been taught, with their *Mother's Milk*, to have the utmost Abhorrence to the very Name of a *Bishop*; tho' they cou'd not tell why. Let them rather consider seriously the Misfortune of their Education, which shou'd make them Strangers, to all the rest of the *Christian World* but themselves in a Corner; and to all the former *Ages of Christianity*.

BUT, are they willing to be undeceiv'd? Then they must know that *Episcopacy* has none so great an Enemy as the *Papacy*; which wou'd engross the whole *Episcopal Power*, into the single *See of Rome*; by making all other *Bishops* absolutely dependent
upon

upon *that*, which *only* they call the *Apostolical* Chair. And no longer since than the Council of *Trent*, the *Pope* endeavour'd with all his Interest, to have *Episcopacy*, except *only* that of the *Bishop* of *Rome*, to be declar'd not to be *Jure divino*. By which none other *Bishops* cou'd claim any other Power, but what they had from Him. But even *that* Council was not so quite degenerated as to suffer *this* to pass.

AND the *Jesuits*, and others, who disputed there on the *Pope's* Part, us'd these same Arguments against the *divine* Right of *Episcopacy*, which from them, and the *Popish* Canonists and *School-men* have been lick'd up by the *Presbyterians* and others of our *Dissenters*. They are the same Arguments that are us'd by *Pope* and *Presbyter* against *Episcopacy*.

WHEN the *Pope* cou'd not carry his Cause against *Episcopacy* in the Council of *Trent*, he took another Method, and that was, to set up a vast Number of *Presbyterian* Priests, that is, the *Regulars*, whom he exempted from the Jurisdiction of their respective *Bishops*, and fram'd them into a *Method* and *Discipline* of their own, accountable only to *Superiours* of his, and their own contriving; which is exactly the *Presbyterian* Model

THESE *Usurpations* upon the *Episcopal* Authority, made the famous *Arch-bishop* of *Spalato*, quit his great Preferments in the *Church* of *Rome*, and travel into *England*, in the Reign of *King James I.* to seek for a more *Primitive* and *Independent* *Episcopacy*. Himself, in his *Consilium Profectionis*, gives these same Reasons for it: And that this shameful *Depression* and *Prostitution* of *Episcopacy*, in the *Church* of *Rome*, was the Cause of his leaving her.

HE observ'd truly, that the further we search upward into *Antiquity*, there is still more to be found of the *Episcopal*, and less of the *Papal* Power and *Eminency*.

ST. *Ignatius* is full, in every Line almost, of the high Authority of the *Bishop*, next and immediately under *Christ*; as all the other Writers in those primitive

tive Times : But there is a profound Silence in them all of that *Supremacy* in the *Bishop* of *Rome*, which is now claim'd over all the other *Bishops* of the *Catholic Church* ; which could not be, if it had been then known in the World. This had been a short and effectual Method, whereby *St. Paul*, or *St. Clement* might have quieted the great *Schism* of the *Corinthians*, against which they both wrote, in their *Epistles* to them; to bid them refer their Differences to the *Infallible Judge* of *Controversies*, the *Supreme Pastor* at *Rome*. But not a Word of this. Especially considering that *St. Peter* was one, for whom some of these *Corinthians* strove (*1. Cor. i. 12.*) against those who preferr'd others before HIM.

THE usurp'd *Supremacy* of the later *Bishops* of *Rome* over their *Fellow Bishops*, has been as fatal to *Episcopacy*, as the *Rebellion* of our yet later *Presbyters* against their respective *Bishops*.

AND indeed, whoever wou'd write the true History of *Presbyterianism*, must begin at *Rome*, and not at *Geneva*.

SO very groundless as well as malicious, is that popular Clamour of *Episcopacy* having any the least Relation to *Popery*. They are so utterly irreconcilable, that it is impossible they can stand together : For that Moment that *Episcopacy* were restor'd to its primitive *Independency*, the *Papacy*, that is, that *Supremacy*, which do's now distinguish it, must *ipso facto* cease.

THUS I have shewn, in Answer to the Objection of the Ages of *Popery* in *England*, that all those Errors, even *Idolatry* it self, do's not un-Church, nor break *Succeſſion*. And 2dly. I have exemplify'd this from the parallel of the *Jewish Church*, under the *Law*. Then applying of this to our Case, I have vindicated *Episcopacy* from the Imputation of *Popery*. And I will now go on to farther Reasons, why the *Succeſſion* of our present *Bishops* is not hurt by that *Deluge* of *Popery* which once cover'd the Face of *Great Britain*.

THE

THE End of all Government, as well in the Church as State, is to preserve *Peace*, *Unity* and *Order*; and this cannot be done, if the *Mal-Administration* of the *Officers* in the Government, did vacate their *Commission*, without its being recall'd by those who gave such *Commission* to them. For then, 1st. Every Man must be *Judge*, when such a *Commission* is vacated; and then no Man is bound to obey longer than he pleases. 2^{dly}. One may say it is vacated, another not, whence perpetual Contention must arise.

A Man may forfeit his *Commission*, that is, do those Things, which give just Cause to his Superiours to take it from him: But it is not actually vacated, 'till it be actually re-call'd by those who have lawful Power to take it from him: Otherwise there cou'd be no *Peace* nor *Certainty* in the World, either in public or private Affairs.

No Family cou'd subsist. No Man enjoy an Estate. No Society whatever cou'd keep together: And the Church being an outward Society must consequently subsist by those *Laws*, which are indispensable to every Society. And tho' *Idolatry* do's justly forfeit the *Commission* of any Church, in this Sense, that God's Promises to her being Conditional, HE may justly take her *Commission* from her, and remove her *Candlestick*: Now tho' her *Commission* be thus forfeitable, yet it still continues, and is not actually vacated, 'till God shall please actually to recall it, or take it way: For no *Commission* is void, 'till it be so declar'd. Thus, tho' the *Jews* did often fall into *Idolatry*, yet (as before has been said) God did bear long with them; and did not un-Church them, tho' they had justly forfeited. And those wicked *Husband-men*, who slew those whom the Lord sent for the *Fruits* of his *Vineyard*, yet continu'd still to be the *Husband men* of the *Vineyard*, 'till their Lord did dispossess them, and gave their *Vineyard* unto others.

AND *natural Reason*, do's enforce this; if a *Steward* abuse his *Trust*, and oppresses the *Tenants*, yet are they still oblig'd to pay their *Rent* to him, and his *Discharges* are sufficient to them against their *Landlord*, 'till he shall *supersede* such a *Steward*. And thus it is in the *Sacerdotal Commission*. Abuses in it, do not take it away, 'till God or those to whom He has committed such an *Authority*, shall *suspend*, *deprive*, or *degrade*, (as the *Fact* requires) such a *Bishop* or a *Priest*.

AND there is this higher Consideration in the *Sacerdotal Commission*, than in those of *civil Societies*; that it being immediately from God, as none (therefore) can take this *Honour* to Himself, but he that is called of God, as was *Aaron*; so none can take it away, but he that is as expressly and outwardly called thereunto, as *Aaron* was to be a *Priest*. For this wou'd be to *Usurp* upon God's immediate *Prerogative*, which is to constitute his own *Priests*. Upon this Foundation I argue.

As the *Necessity* of *Government*, and the *General Commands* in *Scripture*, of *Obedience* to *Government* do require our Submission to the *Government* in being, where there is no *Competition* concerning the *Titles*, that is, where no One claims a better *Right* than the *Possessor*: So where a *Church*, once establish'd by God, tho' suffering many *Interruptions*, do's continue, Her *Governours* ought to be acknowledg'd, where there is no better *Claim* set up against them.

THIS was the Reason why our *Saviour* and his *Apostles* did, without *Scruple*, acknowledge the *High-Priest* and *Sanhedrin* of the *Jews* in their Time; tho' from the Days of the *Maccabees*, there had been great *Interruptions*, and *Breaches* in the due *Succession* of their *Priests*: And before *Christ* came, and all his Time, the *Romans* as *Conquerors*, dispos'd of the *Priesthood* as they pleas'd; and made it *annual* and *arbitrary*, which God had appointed *hereditary* and *unmoveable*.

BUT

BUT there was then no *Competition*. The *Jews* did submit to it, because they were under the Subjection of the *Romans*, and cou'd have no other; no *High-Priest* claimed against him in Possession, but all submitted to him.

AND our *Saviour* did confirm his *Authority*, and of the *Sanhedrin*, or inferior Priests with him; (*Mat. xxiii. 2.*) Saying, *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses's Seat: All therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do.* And St. Paul own'd the *Authority* of the *High-priest*, *Acts xxiii. 5.*

MANY Objections might have been rais'd against the Deduction of their *Succession* from *Moses*: But there being none who claim'd a better *Right* than they had; therefore their *Right* was *uncontroverted*; and by our *Saviour's* *Authority* was confirm'd.

Now, Suppose some *Interruptions* had been in the *Succession*, or *Corruptions* in the *Doctrine*, and *Worship* of our *English Bishops*, in former Ages, yet, (as in the Case of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*) that cou'd have no Effect to invalidate their *Commission* and *Authority* at the present.

LEST the *Dissenters* should think, that what has been last said may be of any Service to them, in answering their Defects as to *Succession*, I desire them to take Notice, that it is *only* Meant of a Church *which was once establish'd by God*; but *Episcopacy*, and no other *Form of Government* was established by God, (as I will fully shew by and by) therefore they are cut off from making this Plea.

LET us now enquire what *Assurance* and *Consent* there is in the *Episcopal Communion*, beyond that of any other. I am the rather induc'd to make this Enquiry, because I have met with many ignorant People who have been taught, that there are more who disown *Episcopacy* than own it; and therefore if they shou'd depart from their present

present Principles, they must condemn the greatest part of the Christian World.

To shew therefore these poor People, into what a wretched Error they are unhappily deluded ; (not that I wou'd be here understood as if I meant, that Truth were to be decided by Numbers) I will now inform them how infinitely they are mistaken in their Supposition ; and if it was any Argument before for their not coming over to *Episcopacy*, because they thought the greatest part of the Christian World were *anti-Episcopal*, it ought now to be as strong a Motive for their embracing of *Episcopacy*, when they are undeceiv'd, and find what small proportion those who are against *Episcopacy*, bear to those who have it.

LET them therefore know assuredly, that the whole *Christian World*, as it always has been, so it is, at this present, *Episcopal*, except a few *Dissenters*, who, in less than two hundred Years last past, have arisen like a Wart upon the Face of the *Western Church*. For little more Proportion do our *Dissenters* in *Great-Britain* and *New England*, the *Hugonots* in *France*, the *Presbyterians* in *Holland*, *Geneva*, and thereabouts, bear to the whole Body of the *Latin Church*, which is all *Episcopal*. But if you compare them with the *Catholick Church* all over the World, which is all *Episcopal*, they will not appear so big as a *Mole*.

If our *Dissenters* think it much that the Church of *Rome* is reckon'd in the List against them ; we will be content to leave them out ; Nay more, if we shou'd give them all those Churches, which own the Supremacy of *Rome*, to be joyn'd with them, (as they are the nearest a-kin to them of any I know in the World) it will be so far from casting the Ballance on their side, that the other *Episcopal Churches* will, by far, out-number them both.

LET us then, to these *Dissenters* against *Episcopacy*, add the *Churches* of *Italy*, and *Spain* entire, with the *popish* Part of *Germany*, *France*, *Poland*, and *Hungary*, (I think they have no more to reckon upon) against these we produce the vast Empire of *Russia*, (which is greater in Extent, than all those *popish* Countries before nam'd) *Great-Britain*, *Denmark*, *Sweden*, and all the *Lutheran Churches* in *Germany*, which will vastly out-number both the *Papists* and (their *Kinsmen*) the *Dissenters* of all *Denominations* before mention'd. And this Comparison is only made as to the *Latin Church*.

BUT then, we have all the rest of the *Christian World*, wholly on the *Episcopal* side, against both the *Supremacy* of *Rome*, and parity of the *Presbyterians*, &c. viz. The whole *Greek Church*, the *Armenians*, *Georgians*, *Mingrelians*, † *Jacobites*, the *Christians* of *St. Thomas* and *St. John*, in the *East-Indies*, and other *Oriental Churches*.

THEN in *Africa*, the *Copties* in *Ægypt*, and great Empire of the *Abyssins* in *Æthiopia*. These all are *Episcopal*, and never own'd the *Supremacy* of *Rome*, and over-reckon, out of Sight, all that disown *Episcopacy*, and all that own the *Supremacy* of *Rome* with them.

LET me add, that among our *Dissenters*, every Class of them do's condemn all the rest; the *Presbyterian* condemns the *Quaker*; the *Quaker* condemns him; *Independent*, *Baptist*, &c. all condemn one another, and each deny the other's *Ordination*, or *Call*.

IF to what has been last said, it should be reply'd, that this is a *Mis-representation*, and that they

† Here I must be oblig'd to account for this Term *Jacobites*. because I am dealing with a People who are very timorous and apt to start at a Word, if they don't like the Sound of it, tho' its Meaning be never so innocent. These *Jacobites* then are vast Numbers of *Christians* inhabiting in *Babylonia* and *Mesopotamia*, under a *Patriarch* of their own.

don't deny each other's Ordination; alas-a-day, they deny it! no, no, they live amicably together, tho' the Bigots of *Uniformity* (as *Cotton Mather* modestly calls the Church of *England*) won't believe Absurdities, Contradictions, and Impossibilities; that *Fire* and *Water*, *Earth* and *Air*, shou'd mingle together in one *comprehensive Mass*, without so much as one faint Struggle, which should get uppermost; I say, such an Insinuation as this, will give me a fair Opportunity of producing a certain very long and black, jet-black List of *Anathema's* and *Damnations*, that were thunder'd out by each one severally against the other, (in those Days of *Purity*, as some good Men call them) the Days of *Super-Re-reformation* in *England*, from 41 to 60; by the *Anabaptists*, *Muggletonians*, *Anti-Sabbatarians*, *Antinomians*; and more particularly between that lovely loving Pair, the red-hot *Presbyterians*, and the no less fiery *Homothumadon Brethren*: Which, I make no Question, will satisfy most People, that as much like Lambs as they appear at present, they have very long Teeth as well as Claws, and that they never fail'd making use of them when they had Power.

So that, as I said before, the Ordination of every one of them is disown'd by all the rest; and all of them together by the whole *Christian World*. And if their *Ordinations* are not *valid*, then they have no more *Authority* to administer the *Sacraments*, than any other *Lay men*; and consequently, there can be no Security in receiving *Baptism* from any of them.

WHAT allowances God will make to *those* who think their *Ordination* to be good enough, and that they are true *Ministers* of the *Gospel*; and, as such, do receive the *Sacraments* from them, I shall not determine.

But THEY have no Reason to expect the like Allowances who are warned of it before-hand, and

will notwithstanding venture upon it, before these *Dissenters* have fully and clearly acquitted themselves of so great and *universal* a Charge laid against them; such an one, as must make the whole *Christian World* Wrong, if they are in the *Right*; not only the present *Christian Churches*, but all the Ages of *Christianity* from *Christ*. Of which the *Dissenters* are desir'd to produce *any one*, in *any* part of the *World*, that was not *Episcopal* — any one constituted Church upon the Face of the *Earth*, that was not govern'd by *Bishops*, distinct from, and superiour to *Presbyters*, before the *Vaudois* in *Piedmont*, the *Hugonots* in *France*, the *Calvinists* in *Geneva*, and the *Presbyterians* thence transplanted in the last Age, into *Holland*, *Scotland*, *Old England* and *New England*.

IF it shou'd be return'd, that neither is the Church of *England* without *Opposers*; for, that the Church of *Rome* opposes her, as do likewise our *Dissenters*.

I Answer, None of them do oppose her, in the Point we are now upon, that is, the validity of *Episcopal Ordination*, which the Church of *Rome* do's own; and the *Presbyterians* dare not deny it, because they wou'd (thereby) overthrow all their own *Ordinations*; for the *Presbyters* who reform'd (as they call it) from *Bishops*, receiv'd their *Ordinations* from *Bishops*.

AND therefore, tho' the *Episcopal Principles* do invalidate the Ordination by *Presbyters*, yet the *Presbyterian Principles* do not invalidate the Ordination by *Bishops*: So that this *Validity* of *Episcopal Ordination* stands safe, on all sides, even by the Confession of those who are *Enemies* to the *Episcopal Order*: And, in this, the *Bishops* have no *Opposers*.

WHEREAS, on the other Hand, the *Validity* of the *Presbyterian Ordination*, is own'd by none but themselves; and they have all the rest of the *Christian*

stian World as opposite to them. Therefore, to state the Case the most impartially; to receive *Baptism* from these *Dissenters*, is, at least, an *Hazard* of many *Thousands* to *One*; as many as all the rest of *Christianity* are more than they: But to receive it from the *Bishops*, or *Episcopal Clergy*, has no *Hazard* at all, as to its *Validity*, even as own'd by the *Presbyterians* themselves.

Now, if any Person should find fault with this way of Reasoning, and should say, that this is rank *Popery*, a *Popish* Argument to perswade People to come over to the *safer side*; and that if this Argument be conclusive, we our selves must return to the *Church of Rome*: I say, if any shall think thus, I here give them this Answer. That in all the Disputes betwixt the *Church of Rome* and *Us*, we have the Advantage of this Argument against them in every Point. For Example; they say, That if the Church thought it fit to give the *Communion* in both Kinds; to have the *publick Offices* in the *vulgar Tongue*, to have no *Images* or *Pictures* of *God the Father* in their *Churches*, and so of other Matters, it wou'd do well, and they wou'd be pleas'd with it; and all of them that ever I met with say, they wou'd be glad and rejoice in it. And confess, (that 'bating the *Authority* of the *Church*) we are on the *safer side* of the Question. For no one says, that it is a Sin to worship God without any *Image* of Him before me.

THEREFORE the whole *Hazard* lies on the other side, *viz.* Whether that be not the *Idolatry* forbidden, *Deut. iv. 12. 15, 16, &c.* and many other Places in Scripture? Again, it can be no Sin to receive the *holy Sacrament* in both *Kinds*, as it was instituted. But the Dispute is, whether taking away the *Cup* is not *mutilating* the *Sacrament*, and consequently *Sacrilege*, as *Pope Gelasius* call'd it? And then, whether the Council of *Constance* had Authority to enact this *Sacrilege* with a *non obstante* to the *Institution* of

Christ, and the Practice of the Church to that Time, which was 1400 Years after *Christ*?

I say, we have no plainer and more perswasive Arguments against the *Papists*, than to shew them, that we are on the safer side all the Way.

AND wou'd you (you who are so much against *Popery*) have us lose this Advantage, by running down the Argument of *being on the safer side*?

BUT now, the only Point wherein the *Papists* so much as pretend to turn the Argument upon us, is on Account of our *Mission*. And this grounded on a false and foolish Story they had trump'd up of the *Nag's-Head Consecration*.

BUT this has been confuted, and our first *Consecrations* so fully vindicated, that, as Arch-bishop *Bramhal* has shewed to us, the *Papists* themselves have quitted that Pretence and given it up.

The *Arch-bishop* has printed the *Original Record* of that *Consecration* which is still preserv'd and forth-coming. So that there is no Dispute of the *Validity* of our *Ordinations*, nor consequently of our *Baptism*.

THEREFORE we perswade you to the *surest Side*, without giving any Advantage to the *Papists*; for we perswade them by the same Argument. And are sure that we are on the *safe Side*, in our Disputes with *Them*, as well as with *You*.

THEREFORE this Argument can be of no Advantage to the Church of *Rome*, nor is any Way leading to *Popery*.

AND now, having mention'd the Word *Popery*, I beg leave to say something concerning it. And herein I shall more immediately direct my self to those poor People, who have been so unhappily deluded with the Sound of this one Word *Popery*, as to fly affrighted from the best constituted, the most *Primitive* and *Apostolic* Church at this Day in the whole World; I mean the Church of *England*.

To you, my Friends, I direct my Discourse at present, and therefore let me freely speak to you ; and I entreat you to take particular Notice of what follows. I make no Question but that most of you think, that the Government of the Church by *Bishops* is an *Innovation*, brought in by the *Popes* of *Rome*. And indeed I do not greatly blame you for so thinking, because I know that you have been taught to believe, that *Bishops* are an *Innovation* upon the primitive Government of the Church, introduced by the Pride and Tyranny of *Rome* : That in the *first* and *purest* Ages of *Christianity*, *Bishops* were utter Strangers to the Church : And that in later Ages when the Church had many Corruptions in it, *this* likewise of *Bishops* was introduc'd, particularly by the Pope of *Rome*, [*that Man of Sin*] upon the Ruins of the true *primitive Presbyterial, Apostolic* Government. That (as I said before) in the first and purest Ages, *Bishop* and *Presbyter* were the same, without any Difference ; and if so, (no doubt) *Bishops* superiour to *Presbyters* must be an *Usurpation* upon that *Discipline* which *Christ* appointed : And therefore to say that there is any Difference between them is *Popery*, ay, rank *Popery*.

I make no doubt, but that I have stated your Case right, I mean, that you *so believe*, and that you have *so been taught*.

AND now my Friends, let me entreat you to be undeceiv'd. And in order to it, I shall first remark, that *this one Word* *POPERY*, has been the *Trojan-Horse* let in among us, from whence most, (if not all) of our present Troubles have arisen : This Word *Popery* has been that fatal Engine which has been used by wicked and malicious Men, to raise those high, frightful, and *un-Christian* Walls of *Separation* between us. This is an old Stratagem, (and I wou'd to God it were not now us'd.) If wicked Men have a Mind to blacken any Thing, tho' never so good and innocent in itself, they presently

make an hideous Out-cry of *Popery*, *Idolatry*, and *Superstition*; this rouses the mad *Enthusiast*; this it is that catches with the gaping *Rabble*, the mad *unthinking* *Populace*, who seldom examin Things deeper than their Surfaces; it was this Word *Popery* which the subtle Sons of *Machiavel* and *Mischief* made use of (sometime after the Rebellion had broken out against King *Charles* the First of *blest* *Memory*) to gain their wicked Ends: And it was chiefly by this fatal *Ignis Fatuus*, that they hurry'd our deluded Ancestors into those horrid Fields of *Blood* and *Confusion*: Where, when they were once enter'd (good God!) what Havock did they make! Parents against their Children, and Children against their Parents! How did they rifle (which was a Thing not practis'd by the worst of Men, nay, even a *vicious Heathen* wou'd have blush'd at it) I say, how did they rifle the fair, the sacred and goodly Monuments of the Dead! and those stately and magnificent *Piles*, those majestic and awful *Structures*, I mean those *Christian Temples*, which were rais'd in honour of our *God* and our *Redeemer*, were by these impious *Wretches* turned into *Stables* and *Slaughter-Houses*. And at length, horridly striding from one Step of Wickedness to another, they, (oh dreadful!) they, I say, murdered the *Parent* of their Country! the best *Christian* as well as the best *King* upon *Earth*; and after that, they overwhelm'd and bury'd in Ruins the best *Church* in the whole World: But God be thanked it arose again.

AND all these horrid Things were perpetrated by Men who had been sadly deluded, and had been taught that many Things in the *Church* of *England* were Rags of the Whore of *Babylon*, and particularly that Bishops were Creatures of the Pope's making; and to have them in the *Church* was rank *Popery*.

THIS (as I said before) has been an old Device, and I do not so greatly wonder that you likewise of
this

this present Age (both here and in *New-England*) are deceiv'd, when the same Artifice is made use of to delude you.

BUT in answer to this Charge, *that the Government of the Church by Bishops is Popish*; I tell you, that it is a vile and wicked Insinuation. And to make it plain to you that it is not *Popish*, I will shew you how it is impossible that it should be so: (and I should think *that* were sufficient in all Reason, to satisfy any Man, but him who is resolv'd not to be convinc'd:) And the Method I shall take in proving this, shall be first, in telling you, that the first Pope of *Rome* (in the modern, and in your Acceptation of the Word *Pope*) was not till the 7th Century, above Six hundred years after *Christ*: And nextly I will produce the Testimonies of the *Primitive Fathers* and *Councils* of the *Church*, and these Testimonies shall be brought from the first and purest Ages of the *Christian Church*, the first Four hundred and fifty Years after *Christ*: the latest of which *Authorities* is 150 Years before there was a Pope of *Rome*, (in the present Acceptation of the Word *Pope*) and if those Testimonies which I shall presently produce, make mention of the *Bishops* as the *only Governours* of the *Church*, and not *only* of the Time in which each one of these Persons lived, but speaking of *Bishops* as ordained by *Christ* and his *Apostles*, and having descended down all the Way to each one of them by an *uninterrupted Succession*; I say, if these *Testimonies* affirm thus much, let no Man be so foolish, nay, wicked and malicious, as to say, that it is *Papery*, when some of the Persons, whose Testimonies I produce, lived above 500, and the latest of them 150 Years before the *Pope* was thought of.

HERE follows a short *Collection* of *Authorities* for *Episcopacy*, as distinct from, and superiour to *Presbytery*, taken out of the *Fathers* and *Councils*, in the first four hundred and fifty Years after *Christ*.

In

In the Year of our LORD 70.

ST. Clement Bishop of Rome, and a glorious *Martyr*, whose Praise is in the Gospel, and of whom particular Mention is made, *Phil. iv. 3. Clement—whose Name is in the Book of Life.* He I say, speaks thus, in his 1st. *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, n. 42. p. 89. of the Edition of Oxford, 1697.

THE Apostles having preach'd the Gospel, thro' Regions and Cities, did constitute the first Fruits of them, having prov'd them by the Spirit, to be Bishops and Ministers [or Deacons] of those who shou'd believe; and this, not as a new Thing, for many Ages before it was written concerning Bishops and Ministers [or Deacons]; for, thus saith

Isa. Lx. constitute their Bishops in Righteousness
17. and their Ministers [or Deacons] in Faith. What wonder is it then, that

those who were intrusted by God, in Christ, with this Commission, should constitute those before spoke of?

IBID. N. 44. And the *Apostles* knew by the Lord *Jesus Christ*, that Contests wou'd arise concerning the *Episcopal* Name, (or Order) and for this Cause, having perfect fore-knowledge (of these Things) they did ordain those whom we have mention'd before; and moreover, did establish the Constitution, that other approv'd Men should succeed those who dy'd, in their Office and Ministry.

THEREFORE those that were constituted by them, or afterwards by other approved Men, with the Consent of all the Church, (or the Church applauding the Choice) and have administred to the Flock of Christ unblamably, with Humility and Quietness, without all Stain of Filth or Naughtiness; and have carry'd a good Report, of a long Time, from all Men, I think cannot, without great Injustice, be turn'd out of their Office; For, it will be no
small

small Sin to us, if we thrust those from their Bishopricks who have holily and without Blame offer'd our Gifts (and Prayers) to God. Blessed are those Priests who are happily dead, for they are not afraid of being ejected out of the Places in which they are constituted. For, I understand that you have depos'd some, from their Ministry, who behav'd themselves un-reproveable amongst you.

Par. 40. To the *High-Priest* his proper Offices were appointed; the *Priests* had their proper Order, and the *Levites* their peculiar Services, or *Deaconships*; and the *Lay-men*, what was proper for *Lay-men*.

THIS, as before shewn, St. Clement apply'd to the Distribution of Orders in the Christian Church; Bishops, Priests and Deacons. And the Office of the *Levites*, is here call'd by the Word *Διακονία* i. e. the Office of *Deacons*.

Anno Domini. 71. St. Ignatius, a glorious Martyr of Christ, was constituted, by the Apostles, *Bishop* of *Antioch*, and did thereby verily think that he succeeded them (as all other Bishops do) in their full *Apostolical* Office. Thence he salutes the Church of the *Trallians*, in the Fulness of the *Apostolical* Character; and in his Epistle he says to them.

BE Subject unto your *Bishops* as to the Lord — And to the *Presbyters*, as to the *Apostles* of Christ — Likewise the *Deacons* also, being *Ministers* of the *Mysteries* of Christ, ought to please in all Things — *Without these there is no Church.* — He is without, who do's any Thing without the *Bishop*, and *Presbyters* and *Deacons*; and such a one is defil'd in his Conscience.

IN his Epistle to the *Magnesians*, he tells them, That they ought not to despise their *Bishop*, for his Youth, but to pay him all manner of Reverence, according to the Commandment of God the Father. And as I know that your holy *Presbyters* do —

THEREFORE as Christ did nothing without the
Father,

Father, so neither do ye, whether *Presbyter*, *Deacon*, or *Laic*, any thing without the *Bishop*.

SOME indeed call him *Bishop*, yet do all Things without him; but these seem not to me to have a good Conscience, but rather to be *Hypocrites* and *Scorners*.

I exhort you to do all Things in the same Mind of God, the *Bishop* presiding in the Place of God; and the *Presbyters* in Room of the Colledge of the *Apostles*; and the *Deacons*, most beloved in me, who are intrusted with the Ministry of *Jesus Christ*.

HE directs his *Epistle* to the Church at Philadelphia, to those who are in Unity with their *Bishop* and *Presbyters* and *Deacons*. And says to them, in his *Epistle*.

THAT as many as are of *Christ*, these are with the *Bishop*; and those who shall repent, and return to the Unity of the Church, being made worthy of *Jesus Christ*, shall partake of eternal Salvation in the Kingdom of *Christ*.

MY Brethren, be not deceiv'd, if any shall follow him that makes a *Schism*, he shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.

I exhort you to partake of the one *Eucharist*, for there is one *Body* of the *Lord Jesus*, and one *Blood* of his, which was shed for us; and one *Cup* — and one *Altar*, so there is one *Bishop*, with his *Presbytery*, and the *Deacons* my Fellow-Servants

GIVE heed to the *Bishop*, and to the *Presbytery*, and to the *Deacons* — without the *Bishop* do nothing.

IN his *Epistle* to the *Smyrnæans*, he says, Flee Divisions as the Beginning of Evils. All of you follow your *Bishop*, as *Jesus Christ* the *Father*; and the *Presbytery*, as the *Apostles*, and reverence the *Deacons* as the Institution of God. Let no Man do any Thing of what appertains to the Church, without the *Bishop*, let that *Sacrament* be judg'd effectual and firm, which is dispenced by the *Bishop*, or by him

him to whom the *Bishop* has committed it. Where ever the *Bishop* is, there let the People be; as where *Christ* is, the *Heavenly Host* is gather'd together. It is not lawful, without the *Bishop*, either to baptize, or celebrate the Offices: But what he approveth of, according to the good pleasure of God, *that* is firm and safe, and so we do every Thing securely.

I Salute your most worthy *Bishop*, your venerable *Presbytery*, and the *Deacons* my Fellow Servants.

I N his Epistle to St. *Polycarp*, Bishop of *Smyrna*, and Martyr, *who together with himself, was Disciple* to St. *John* the *Apostle*, and *Evangelist*. He gives these *Directions*.

If any can remain in Chastity, to the Glory of the Body of the Lord, let him remain without Boasting, if he boast, he perishes; and if he pretends to know more than the *Bishop* he is corrupted. It is the Duty both of Men and Women that marry, to be joyn'd together by the Approbation of the *Bishop*, that the Marriage may be in the Lord—* Give heed to your *Bishop*, that God may hearken unto You. My Soul for theirs, who Subject themselves under the Obedience of their *Bishop*, *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, and let me take my Lot with them in the Lord.

* *Ignatius* here speaks not to *Polycarp*, but thro' Him to the Church of *Smyrna*.

A N D he says to Bishop *Polycarp*, *Let nothing be done without thy Sentence and Approbation*.

A. D. 180. St. *Irenæus* Bishop of *Lyons*, in *France*, who was Disciple of St. *Polycarp*, and flourish'd about the Year of *Christ* 180. In his Book, *Advers. Hæreses*. l. 3. c. 3.

WE can reckon those *Bishops*, who have been constituted by the *Apostles*, and their Successors all the Way to our Times. And if the *Apostles* knew hidden Mysteries, they wou'd certainly deliver them chiefly to those, to whom they committed the Churches themselves; and whom they left their
own

own *Successors*, and in the same place of Government as themselves. We have the *Successions* of the Bishops, to whom the *Apostolic* Church in every place was committed. All these (Hereticks) are much later than the Bishops, to whom the *Apostles* did deliver the Churches.

L. 4. c. 6. The true Knowledge is the Doctrine of the *Apostles*, and the ancient State of the Church, thro' the whole World, and the Churches of the Body of *Christ*, according to the *Succession* of the *Bishops*, to whom they committed the Church that is in every Place; and which has descended even unto us.

A. D. 203. *Tertullian*, of the Prescription of *Hereticks*. c. 32.

LET them (Hereticks) produce the Original of their Churches; let them shew the Order of their Bishops, that by their *Succession*, deduc'd from the Beginning, we may see whether their first Bishop had any of the *Apostles*, or *Apostolical* Men, who did likewise persevere with the *Apostles*, for his Founder and Predecessor. For, thus the *Apostolical Churches* do derive their *Succession*: As the Church of *Smyrna* from *Polycarp*, whom *John* (the Apostle) placed there? The Church of *Rome* from *Clement*, who was, in the like manner, ordain'd by *Peter*: And so the other Churches can produce those constituted in their *Bishopricks* by the *Apostles*.

C. 36. Reckon over the *Apostolical Churches*, where the very Chairs of the *Apostles* do yet preside in their own Places. At *Corinth*, *Philippi*, *Ephesus*, *Thessalonica*, &c.

OF Baptism, c. 17. The *High priest*, who is the *Bishop*, has the Power of conferring Baptism; and under him the *Presbyters* and *Deacons*; but not without the Authority of the Bishop.

A. D. 220. *Origenis* Comment. in *Matt. Rathomagi*, 1668. Gr. Lat. p. 255.

Origen

Origen names the distinct Orders of *Bishop, Presbyter* and *Deacon*. Such a Bishop (*says he, speaking of one who sought vain Glory, &c.*) doth not desire a good Work—— and the same is to be said as to *Presbyters* and *Deacons*—— The *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, who have the chief Place among the People—— The *Bishop* is called Prince in the Churches: *And speaking of the irreligious Clergy, he directs it to them, whether Bishops, Presbyters, or Deacons.*

A. D. 240. St. Cyprian, Arch-bishop of Carthage.

Edit. Oxon. Epist. 33. Lapsis.

Our Lord, whose Commands we ought to reverence and obey, being about to constitute the *Episcopal* Honour, and the Frame of his Church, said to *Peter, Thou art Peter, &c.* From whence the Order of Bishops and Constitution of the Church do's descend, by the *Line of Succession*, through all Times and Ages, that the Church shou'd be built upon the Bishops—— It is establish'd by the Divine Law, that every Act of the Church shou'd be Govern'd by the Bishop.

To *Cornelius*, then Bishop of *Rome*, *Epist. 45.*

We ought chiefly (Brother) to endeavour to keep that Unity which was enjoyn'd by our Lord and his Apostles to us their Successors, to be carefully observed by us.

Epist. 3. Rogatiano,

The *Deacons* ought to remember that it was the Lord who chose the *Apostles*, that is, the *Bishops*.

Epist. 66. Florentio.

Christ said to the *Apostles*, and by that to all Bishops or Governors of his Church, who succeed the *Apostles* by vicarious Ordination, and are in their stead, *He that heareth you, heareth Me.*

FOR from hence do *Schisms* and *Heresies* arise, and have arisen, while the Bishop, who is ONE, and Governour of the Church, by a proud Presumption is despis'd; and that Man who is honoured as worthy by God, is accounted unworthy by Man.

Epist.

Epist. 59. *Cornelio.*

NOR are Heresies sprung up, or Schisms arisen from any other Fountain than from hence, that Obedience is not paid to the *Priest* of God; and that there is not one *Priest* at a Time in the Church, and one Judge for the Time in the Place of *Christ*. To whom, if the whole Fraternity did obey, according to the divine Oeconomy, none wou'd dare to move any Thing against the *Sacerdotal College*—— It is necessary that the Bishops should exert their Authority with full Vigour. —— But if it is so, that we are afraid of the Boldness of the most profligate; and that which these wicked Men cannot compass by the Methods of Truth and Equity, if they can accomplish by their rashness and Despair, then is there an End of the *Episcopal* Authority, and of their *sublime* and *divine* Power in governing the Church. Nor can we remain *Christians* any longer, if it is come to this, that we shou'd be afraid of the *Threats* and *Snares* of the Wicked ——

—— The Adversary of *Christ*, and Enemy of his Church, for this End strikes at the *Bishop* or Ruler of the Church, with all his Malice, that the Governour being taken away, he might ravage the more violently and cruelly upon the Shipwreck of the Church. ——

Is Honour then given to God, when the Divine Majesty and Censure is so despised, that these sacrilegious Persons say, *do not think of the Wrath of God, be not afraid of his Judgment, do not knock at the Door of the Church*; but without any Repentance or Confession of their Crimes, despising the Authority of their Bishops, and trampling it under their Feet, a false Peace is preach'd to be had from the *Presbyters*, (*viz.*) In their taking upon them to admit those, that were *fallen*, into Communion, or the Peace of the Church, without the *Bishop*.

THEY

THEY imitate the coming of *Anti-Christ* now approaching.

Epist. 80. Successo.

Valerian (the Emperor) wrote to the *Senate*, that the *Bishops* and the *Presbyters*, and the *Deacons*, shou'd be prosecuted.

Firmilianus Cypriano. Epist. 75. p. 225.

THE Power of remitting Sins was given to the *Apostles*, and to the *Bishops*, who have succeeded them by a vicarious Ordination.

Epist. 16. p. 36. Cyprianus Presbyteris & Diaconibus.

WHAT Danger ought we to fear from the Displeasure of God, when some *Presbyters*, neither mindful of the *Gospel*, nor of their own Station in the *Church*, neither regarding the future Judgment of God, nor the *Bishop* who is set over them, which was never done under our Predecessors, with the Contempt and Neglect of their *Bishop*, do arrogate all unto themselves? I cou'd bear with the Contempt of our *Episcopal* Authority, but there is now no room left for Dissembling.

A. D. 365. Optatus Milevitanus, Bishop of Mileve, or Mela in Numidia in Africa, in his second Book against Parmenian.

THE Church has her several Members, *Bishops*, *Presbyters*, *Deacons*, and the Company of the Faithful.

YOU found in the Church, *Deacons*, *Presbyters*, *Bishops*, you have made them *Lay-men*; acknowledge that you have subverted Souls.

A. D. 370. St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, Upon Ephes. iv. 11. Speaking of the several Orders of the Church. And he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets and Evangelists, &c. says, that by the Apostles there, were meant the Bishops; by Prophets, the Expounders of the Scriptures; and by the Evangelists, the Deacons. But says, that they all met in the Bishop; for that he was the chief Priest; that is,

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(says

(says he) *Prince of the Priests*, and both *Prophet* and *Evangelist*, to supply all the Offices of the Church for the Ministry of the Faithful.

And upon 1 *Cor.* xii. 28. says, That *Christ* constituted the *Apostles Head* in the Church; and that these are the *Bishops*.

And upon v. 29. are all *Apostles*? i. e. all are not *Apostles*. This is true, (says he) because in the Church there is but one *Bishop*.

AND because all things are from one God the Father, therefore hath He appointed that one *Bishop* should preside over each Church.

In his Book of the *Dignity of the Priesthood*, c. 3. he says, That there is nothing in this World to be found more *excellent* than the *Priests*; nothing more sublime than the *Bishops*.

AND speaking of what was incumbent on the several Orders of the Church, he do's plainly distinguish them: For, says he, in the same Place;

GOD do's require one thing from a *Bishop*, another from a *Presbyter*, another from a *Deacon*, and another from a *Lay-man*.

A. D. 380. St. *Jerom* in his Comment on the *Epist. to Titus*.

WHEN it began to be said, *I am of Paul, I of Apollos, &c.* and every one thought that those which he baptized, belong'd to himself, and not to *Christ*; it was decreed thro' the whole *Earth*, that one chosen from among the *Presbyters* shou'd be set over the rest, that the Seeds of *Schism* might be taken away.

In his *Epist. to Evagrius*.

FROM Mark the *Evangelist* to *Heracles*, and *Dionysius* the *Bishops*, the *Presbyters* of *Egypt* have always chosen out one from among themselves, whom having placed in an higher Degree than the rest, they called their *Bishop*.

HE that is advanc'd, is advanc'd from less to greater.

THE Greatness of Riches, or the Humility of Poverty, do's not make a Bishop greater or less, seeing *all* of them are the *Successors* of the *Apostles*.

THAT we may know the *Apostolical* OEconomy to be taken from the Pattern of the *Old Testament*, the same that *Aaron* and his *Sons*, and the *Levites* were in the *Temple*, the *Bishops*, *Presbyters*, and *Deacons* are in the Church of *Christ*.

To *Nepotianus*.

BE subject to your *Bishop* or *Chief Priest*, and receive him as the Father of your Soul.

Against the *Luciferians*.

THE Safety of the Church depends upon the Dignity of the *High-priest*, to whom, unless a sort of absolute and eminent Power be given above all, there will be as many *Schisms* in the Church as there are *Priests*. Thence it is, that without the Command of the *Bishop*, neither a *Presbyter* nor a *Deacon* have Power to Baptize; ——— And the *Bishop* is to impose his Hands upon those who are baptized by *Presbyters* or *Deacons*, for the invocation of the holy Spirit.

AND comforting *Heliodorus* a *Bishop*, upon the Death of *Nepotian* his *Presbyter* and Nephew, he commends *Nepotian*, in that he reverenc'd his *Bishop*.

HE honour'd *Heliodorus* in Publick as his *Bishop*, at home as his Father. But among his *Presbyters* and Co-equals, he was the first in his Vocation, &c.

UPON the 6th of *Isa*. He calls the future *Bishops* *Princes* of the Church.

Of the *Ecclesiastical Writers*. Concerning *James*.

JAMES, after the Passion of our Lord, was immediately, by the *Apostles*, ordained *Bishop* of *Jerusalem*. The like he tells of the first *Bishops* of other Places.

Epist. 54. Against Montanus.

WITH us the *Bishops* hold the Place of the *Apostles*.

A. D. 420. St. *Augustin* Bishop of *Hippo* in *Africa*, Epist. 42.

THE Root of the *Christian* Society is diffus'd throughout the World, in a sure Propagation, by the Seats of the *Apostles*, and the Succession of the *Bishops*.

Quest. veter. & novi Test. N. 97.

THERE is none but knows that our *Saviour* did constitute *Bishops* in the Churches; for before he ascended into *Heaven*, he laid his Hands upon the *Apostles* and ordain'd them *Bishops*.

L. 7. c. 43. The Sentence of our Lord *Jesus Christ* is clear, who sent his *Apostles*, and gave to them alone that Power which he had receiv'd from his *Father*; to whom we have succeeded, governing the Church of God by the same Power.

Epist. 162. Speaking of the *Bishops* being call'd *Angels*. Revela. 2. says he, By the Voice of God, the Governour of the Church is prais'd, under the Name of an Angel.

SERMON 24. Of the Words of our Lord.

IF he said to the *Apostles* alone, he that despiseth you, despiseth me, then despise us: But if those Words of his come down even unto us, and that he has called us, and constituted us in their Place, see that you do not despise us.

Against *Fauftus*. L. 33. cap. ult.

WE embrace the holy *Scripture*, which from the Times of the presence of *Christ* himself; by the Disposition of the *Apostles*, and the Successions of other *Bishops* from their Seats, even to these Times, has come down to us, safely kept, commended and honour'd through the whole Earth.

Against *Petilian*. L. 2. c. 51,

WHAT has the Chair of the Church of *Rome* done to thee, in which *Peter* sat, and in which at this Day, *Anastasi*us sits; or of the Church of *Jerusalem*, in which *James* did sit, and in which *John* do's now sit?

Against

Against Julian. L. 2. cap. ult.

Irenæus, Cyprian, Reticus, Olympius, Hilary, Gregory, Basil, John, Ambrose — these were *Bishops*, grave, learn'd, &c.

Questions upon the Old Testament. Q. 35.

THE King bears the Image of God, as the *Bishop* bears the Image of Christ. Therefore while he is in that Station, he is to be honour'd, if not for himself, yet for his Order.

LET this suffice as to the Testimonies of particular *Fathers* of the Church, tho' many more may be produc'd, in that Compass of Time, to which I have confin'd our present Enquiry.

AND now (that no Conviction might be wanting) I will set down some of the *Canons* of the *Councils* in those Times, to the same Purpose; whereby it will appear, that *Episcopacy*, as distinct from, and Superiour to *Presbytery*, was not only the Judgement of the first glorious *Saints* and *Martyrs* of Christ; but the current *Doctrin*, and *Government* of the Church, both *Greek* and *Latin*, in those early Ages of Christianity.

IN the *Canons* of the *Apostles*, the Distinction of *Bishop*, *Presbyter*, and *Deacon* is so frequent, that it is almost in vain to give Citations. The 1. and 2. *Canon* shew the Difference to be observ'd in the Ordaining of them.

LET a *Bishop* be consecrated by two or three *Bishops*.

LET a *Presbyter* and *Deacon* be ordain'd by one *Bishop*.

SEE the same Distinction of these Orders, *Canon* 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 17. 18. 25. 27. 28. 29. 32. 33. 36. 42. 44. 45. 51. 52. 53. 63. 68. 69. 70. 83. *Canon*. 15. Shews the Jurisdiction of the *Bishops* over the *Presbyters* and *Deacons*.

IF any *Presbyter* or *Deacon*, or any of the *Clerical* Order, shall leave his own *Parish*, and go to another, without the *Bishop's* Leave, he shall officiate

ate no longer; especially if he obey not the *Bishop*, when he exhorts him to return, persisting in his Insolence and disorderly Behaviour, but he shall be reduc'd there to communicate only as a *Lay-man*.

AND *Can. 31.* If any *Presbyter*, despising his own *Bishop*, shall gather *Congregations a-part*, and erect another *Altar*, his *Bishop* not being convict of Wickedness or Irreligion, let him be depos'd as an ambitious Person; for, he is a *Tyrant*: As likewise such other *Clergy*, and as many as shall join with Him; but the *Lay-men* shall be excommunicated. But, let this be after the first, second, and third Admonition of the *Bishop*.

Can. 39. Let the *Presbyters* and *Deacons* do nothing without the Consent of the *Bishop*; for it is he to whom the People of the Lord are committed, and from whom an Account of their Souls will be required.

Can. 41. We ordain the *Bishop* to have Power of the Goods of the Church — And to administer to those who want, by the Hands of the *Presbyters* and *Deacons*.

Can. 55. If any *Clergy-man* shall reproach his *Bishop*, let him be depos'd: For, thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of the People.

After the *CANONS* of the Apostles I produce next a great Council of 87 Bishops held at Carthage, in the Year of Christ 256, under St. Cyprian, Arch-bishop of that place, which is published in St. Cyprian's Works before quoted, p. 229. Where he tells us,

THAT besides the *Bishops*, there met there both *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, and great Numbers of the Laity.

THE Council of Eliberis in Spain, about the Year of Christ 305. *Cap. 18, and 19.* Bishops, *Presbyters* and *Deacons* are nam'd distinct. And *C. 32.* *Presbyters* and *Deacons* are forbid to give the Communion to those who grievously offended, without the Command of the *Bishop*.

C. 75. *Of those who shall falsely accuse a Bishop, Presbyter or Deacon.*

Cap. 77. It is ordained that those who are baptiz'd by a *Deacon*, without the *Bishop* or *Presbyter*, shall afterwards be confirm'd by the *Bishop*.

THE Council of *Arles* in *France*, about the Year of *Christ* 309. Cap. 18. It is declar'd that the *Deacons* should be Subject to the *Presbyters*. And c. 19. That the *Presbyters* should be subject to their *Bishop*, and do nothing without his Consent.

A. D. 315. The Council of *Ancyra*, cap. 1. and 2. Having prohibited those *Presbyters* and *Deacons* who had, in Times of Persecution, offer'd to *Idols*, from the Execution of their Office, says, that notwithstanding the *Bishop* may dispence with Them if he sees their Repentance sincere; for that this Power is lodg'd in the *Bishop*.

A. D. 321. The Council of *Laodicea*. Can. 41. That no *Clergy-man* ought to travel, without the Consent of his *Bishop*.

Can. 56. That the *Presbyters* ought not to go into the Church, and sit in their *Stalls*, 'till the *Bishop* come, and to go in with the *Bishop*.

A. D. 325. The first and great Council of *Nice*.

Can. 16. That if any *Presbyters* or *Deacons* leave their own Churches, they ought not to be receiv'd into any other Church: And that if any shall ordain such in his Church, as belong to another, without the Consent of his proper *Bishop*, let such *Ordinations* be void.

A. D. 326. The Council of *Gangra*.

Can. 6. If any have private Meetings out of the Church without their *Presbyter*, let them be anathematiz'd by the Sentence of the *Bishop*.

Can. 7. If any will take or give of the Fruits offer'd to the Church, out of the Church, without Leave of the *Bishop*, let him be *Anathema*.

A. D. 341. The Council of *Antioch*.

Can. 3. If any *Presbyter* or *Deacon*, leaving his own *Parish*, shall go to others; and refuse to return, when his own *Bishop* shall Summon him, let him be depos'd.

Can. 4. If any *Bishop* being depos'd by a *Synod*, or a *Presbyter* or *Deacon* being depos'd by his own proper *Bishop*, shall presume to exercise his Function, let no Room be left them, either for Restoration or Apology.

Can. 5. If any *Presbyter* or *Deacon*, despising his own *Bishop*, shall separate himself from the Church, and gather a Congregation of his own, and set up a different Altar; and shall refuse to submit himself to his *Bishop*, calling him the first and second Time, let him be absolutely depos'd.

Can. 12. If any *Presbyter* or *Deacon* being depos'd by his own proper *Bishop*, or a *Bishop* by the *Synod*, dare appeal to the *King*, seeing his Appeal lies to a greater *Synod* of more *Bishops*, where he is to expect the Examination of his Cause, and to refer the Decision to them: But if, making light of these, he trouble the *King* with it, such an one is worthy of no Pardon, nor ought to be admitted to make any Sort of Apology, or to have hopes of his being ever restor'd any more.

Can. 22. That a *Bishop* ought not to ordain *Presbyters* or *Deacons* in another *Bishop's* Diocese, without his leave.

A. D. 348. In the Council of *Carthage*, Canon 11. The Case is put where a *Deacon* being accus'd, shall be try'd by three neighbouring *Bishops*, a *Presbyter* by six, and a *Bishop* by twelve.

A. D. 381. The Second OEcumenical Council of Constantinople, Canon 6. Ranks those with *Heretics*, who, tho' they Profess the true Faith, yet run into *Schism*, and gather Congregations a-part from, and in Opposition to our Canonical *Bishops*.

A. D.

A. D. 419. *The Council of Carthage, Canon 3.* Mentions the three distinct Orders of *Bishop, Presbyter* and *Deacon*; and compares them to the *High-priest, Priests* and *Levites*.

In the same Manner they are as distinctly mention'd, Canon 4. Bishop, Presbyter and Deacon; and their Powers distinct. For, Canon 6. It is declar'd not to be lawful for Presbyters to consecrate Churches, or reconcile Penitents; but if any be in great Danger, and desirous to be reconcil'd in the Absence of the Bishop, The Presbyter ought to consult the Bishop, and receive his Orders in it, as is declar'd in the 7 Canon.

Can. 10. If any Presbyter, being puff'd up with Pride, shall make a Schism against his own proper Bishop, let him be Anathema.

Canon 11 Gives leave to a Presbyter, who is condemn'd by his Bishop, to appeal to the neighbouring Bishops; but if, without this, he flies off, and makes a Schism from his Bishop, it confirms the Anathema upon him. Canon 12 Orders what is before recited out of Can. 11 of the Council of Carthage.

THAT a Bishop who is accus'd shall be try'd by twelve Bishops, if more may not be had; a Presbyter by six Bishops, with his own Bishop, and a Deacon by three.

Canon 14 Orders that in Tripoli, because of the smaller Number of Bishops in those Parts, a Presbyter shall be judg'd by five Bishops, and a Deacon by three, his own proper Bishop presiding.

Canon 46. That a Presbyter shall not reconcile a Penitent, without the Knowledge of the Bishop; unless upon Necessity in the Absence of the Bishop.

Canon 59. That one Bishop may Ordain many Presbyters; but that it was hard to find a Presbyter who was fit to be made a Bishop.

Canon 65. That a Clergy-man, being condemned by the Bishops, cannot be deliver'd by that Church to which he did belong, or by any Men whatsoever.

Canon

Canon 126. That *Presbyters* and *Deacons* may appeal from their own *Bishop* to the neighbouring *Bishops*, chosen by consent of their own *Bishop*, and from them to the *Primate* or *Provincial Synod*; but not to any *trans-marine* or *foreign Jurisdiction*, under pain of *Excommunication*.

A. D. 451. *The Council of Chalcedon, being the fourth general Council*; *Canon 9.*

IF any *Clergy-man* have a Cause of complaint against another *Clergy-man*, let him not leave his own proper *Bishop*, and have recourse to the *Secular Courts* — Whoever do's otherwise shall be put under the *Canonical Censures*.

Canon 13. That a foreign *Clergy-man*, and not known, shall not officiate in another City, without *Commendatory Letters* from his own *Bishop*.

Canon 18. If any of the *Clergy* shall be found conspiring, or joyning in *Fraternities*, or contriving any Thing against the *Bishops* they shall fall from their own Degree.

Canon 29. To reduce a *Bishop* to the Degree of a *Presbyter* is *Sacrilege*.

THESE Authorities are so plain and full as to prevent any Application, or multiplying of further Quotations which might easily be done: For, if these can be answer'd, so may all that can possibly be produc'd, or even fram'd in Words.

AND there is now no Remedy left to the *Presbyterians* and other *Dissenters* from *Episcopacy*, but to deny all these by Whole-sale, to throw off all *Antiquity*, as well the first Ages of *Christianity*, even that wherein the *Apostles* themselves lived and taught, as all since; and so to stand upon a new Foundation of their own Invention.

BUT this only shews the Desperateness of their Cause; and the Impregnable Bulwark of *Episcopacy*; which (I must say it) stands upon so many, clear, and *Authentic Evidences*, as can never be overthrown, but by such Arguments, such Topicks, as must render *Christianity* it self precarious.

AND

AND if from the *Etymology* of the Words *Bishop* and *Presbyter*, any Argument can be drawn (against all the Authorities produc'd) to prove them the same, we may, by this way of reasoning prove *Cyrus* to be *Christ*, for so he is call'd, *Isa.* 45. 1.—*anointed*, which the Word *Christ* signifies.

OR if the *Presbyterians* will have their *Moderator* to be a *Bishop*, we will not quarrel with them about a Word. Let us then have a *Moderator*, such as the *Bishops* before describ'd, viz. A *Moderator*, as a standing Officer, during *Life*, to whom all the *Presbyters* are to be obedient as to *Christ*, i. e. to the *Moderator*, as representing the Person of *Christ*: That nothing be done in the *Church* without Him: That He be understood as the *Principle* of *Unity* in his *Church*; so that, they who unjustly break off from his *Communion*, are thereby in a *Schism*: That He shew his *Succession*, by regular *Ordination*, convey'd down from the *Apostles*. In short, that He have all that *Character* and *Authority*, which we see to have been recogniz'd in the *Bishops*, in the very *Age* of the *Apostles*, and all the succeeding *Ages* of *Christianity*; and then call Him *Moderator*, *Superintendent*, or *Bishop*: For, the contest is not about the *Name*, but the *Thing*.

AND if we go only upon the *Etymology* of the Word, how shall we prove *Presbyters* to be an *Order* in the *Church*, more than *Bishops*? as *Athanasius* said to *Dracontius*, of those who perswaded him not to accept of a *Bishoprick*. *Why do they perswade you not to be a Bishop, when they themselves will have Presbyters.*

I will end this Head, with the Advice of that great *Father* to this same *Dracontius*.

If the Government of the Churches do not please you; and that you think that the Office of a *Bishop* has no reward, thereby making your self a Despiser of our *Saviour*, who did institute it; I beseech you surmise not any such Things as these, nor do you entertain any who advise such Things; for that is
not

not worthy of *Dracontius* : For what things the Lord did institute by his *Apostles*, those Things remain both good and sure. *Athanas. Epist. ad Dracont.*

HAVING thus explain'd those *Texts of Scripture* which speak of *Episcopacy*, by the concurrent Sense of those who liv'd with the *Apostles*, and were taught the *Faith* from their Mouths; who liv'd zealous *Confessors*, and dy'd glorious *Martyrs of Christ*; and who succeeded the *Apostles* in those very Churches where themselves had sate *Bishops*: And having deduc'd their Testimonies, and of those who succeeded them down for *Four hundred and fifty Years* after Christ; (from which Time, there is not even so much as a Doubt rais'd against the *universal* reception of *Episcopacy*) and this not only from their *Writings apart*, but by their *Canons and Laws*, when assembled together in *Council*; which one wou'd think sufficient Evidence, against none at all on the other side, that is, for the *Succession* of Churches in the *Presbyterian Form*, of which *no one Instance* can be given, so much as of *one Church* in the World so deduc'd, not only from the Days of the *Apostles*, (as is shewn for *Episcopacy*) but before *Calvin* and those who reform'd with him, about 180 Years last past: I say, tho' what is done is sufficient to satisfy any *indifferent and unbiass'd Judgment*, yet there is one *Topic* behind, which, with some Men, I mean our *Dissenting Brethren*, which I say, weighs more than all *Fathers and Councils*; and that is, the late *Reformation*, from whence some date even their very *Christianity*. And if even by this too *Episcopacy* shou'd be witness'd and approv'd, then is there nothing at all in the World left to the Opposers of *Episcopacy*, nothing of *Antiquity, Precedent*, or even any *Authority* but their own wilful *Will* against all *Ages* of the *Catholick Church*, even that of the *Reformation* as well as all the rest.

Let us then examine. First, for the Church of *England*, that is thrown off clearly by our *Dissenters*,

ters, for that was reform'd under *Episcopacy*, and continues so to this Day.

And as to our neighbour Nation of *Scotland*, where the *Presbyterians* do boast, that the *Reformation* was made by *Presbyters*; that is most clearly and authentically confuted, by a late learned and worthy Author (already mention'd) in his *Fundamental Charter of Presbytery*, printed 1695, so as to stop the Mouths of the most perverse, who will not be perswaded tho' they are perswaded.

Go we then abroad, and see the *State* of the *Reformed Churches* there.

THE *Lutherans* are all cut off, as the Church of *England*; for they still retain *Episcopacy*, as in *Denmark*, *Sweden*, &c.

THERE remains now only the *Calvinists*. Here it is the *Presbyterians* set up their Rest! This is their strong (and as they think) impregnable Foundation!

AND even this will fail them as much as all the other: For, be it known unto them (however they will receive it) that *Calvin* himself, and *Beza*, and the rest of the learned *Reformers* of their Part, did give their Testimony for *Episcopacy* as much as any. They counted it a most unjust *Reproach* upon them, to think that they condemn'd *Episcopacy*; which they say they did not throw off, but could not have it there, in *Geneva*, without coming under the *papal Hierarchy*: They highly applauded and congratulated the *Episcopal Hierarchy* of the Church of *England*, as in their several Letters to *Queen Elizabeth*, to the *Arch-bishop* of *Canterbury*, and others of our *English Bishops*: They pray'd heartily to God for the preservation and continuance of it: Bemoan'd their own unhappy Circumstances, that they cou'd not have the like, because they had no *Magistrate* to protect them; and wished for *Episcopacy* in their Churches, the want of which they own'd as a great Defect, but call'd it their *Misfortune* rather than their

their *Fault*. As the learned of the *French Hugonots* have likewise pleaded in *THEIR* behalf.

As for their *Excuse*. I do not now meddle with it, for I think it was not a good one. They might have had *Bishops* from other Places, tho' there were none among themselves, but those who were *Popish*: And they might as well have had *Bishops* as *Presbyters*, without the *Countenance* of the *Civil Magistrate*. It might indeed have rais'd a greater *Persecution* against them; but that is nothing as to the *Truth* of the *Thing*. And if they thought it a *Truth*, they ought to have suffer'd for it.

BUT whatever becomes of their *Excuse*, here it is plain, that they gave their *Suffrage* for *Episcopacy*; which whoso pleases may see it at large in *Dr. Durel's View of the Government and Worship in the Reformed Churches beyond the Seas*, (who was himself one of them) printed 1662.

So that our Modern *Presbyterians* have departed from *Calvin* as well as from *Luther*, in their Abhorrence of *Episcopacy*, from all the *Christian World*, in all Ages; and particularly from all our late *Reformers*, both of one sort and another.

CALVIN wou'd have *anathematiz'd* all of them, had he liv'd in our Days. He says there were none such to be found in his Time, who oppos'd the *Episcopal Hierarchy*, but only the *Papal*, which aspir'd to an *universal Supremacy* in the *See of Rome*, over the whole *Catholick Church*, which is the *Prerogative* of *Christ* alone. BUT, says he,

IF they wou'd give us such an *Hierarchy*, in which the *Bishops* shou'd so excell, as that, they did not refuse to be subject to *Christ*, and to depend upon Him as their *only Head*, and refer all to him; then I will confess that they are worthy of all *Anathemas*, if any such shall be found, who will not reverence it, and submit themselves to it, with the utmost *Obedience*. *Calvin de Necessitat. Eccles Reformand.*

SEE,

SEE, he says, if there shall be any such, which supposes that *He* knew none such; and that *He* own'd none such amongst his *Reformers*: And that if ever any such shou'd arise, *He* thought there were no *Anathemas* which they did not deserve, who shou'd refuse to submit to the *Episcopal Hierarchy*, without such an *Universal Head*, as excludes *Christ* from being the *only universal Head*; for if there be another, (tho' substitute) *He* is not *only*. Thus *He* is call'd the *chief Bishop*, but never the *only Bishop*, because there are others deputed under him.

BUT *Christ* calls no *Bishop* the *universal Bishop*, or *Head* of the *Catholic Church*, because *He* has appointed no *Substitute* in that *supreme Office*; as not of *universal King*, so neither of *universal Bishop*.

AND *Beza* supposes as positively as *Calvin* had done, that there were none who did oppose the *Episcopal Hierarchy* without such an *Universal Head* now upon Earth; or that oppos'd the Order of *Episcopacy*; and condemns them as *Mad-men*, if any such cou'd be found. For thus says *He*,

IF there be any (which you shall hardly persuade me to believe) who reject the whole Order of *Episcopacy*; God forbid that any Man, in his Wits, shou'd assent to the *Madness* of such Men. *Beza*, ad Tractat. de Ministr. Ev. Grad. ab Hadrian. Sarav. Belga Edit. C. I.

AND particularly as to the Church of *England*, and her *Hierarchy* of *Arch-bishops* and *Bishops*; he says, that *He* never meant to oppugn any Thing of that, but calls it a *singular Blessing of God*, and wishes that she may ever enjoy it. Ibid. c. 18.

So that our Modern *Presbyterians* are disarm'd of the Precedent of *Calvin*, *Beza*, and all the *Reformers* abroad; by whose Sentence they are *anathematized*, and counted as *Mad-men*.

HERE then, let us consider and beware of the fatal Progress of *Error*! *Calvin* and the *Reformers* with Him, set up *Presbyterian Government*, as they pre-

pretended, by *Necessity* ; but still kept up and profess'd the highest Regard to the *Episcopal Character* and *Authority* : But those who pretend to follow their Example, have utterly *abdicated* the whole Order of *Episcopacy*, as *Anti-Christian* and an *insupportable Grievance* ! While at the same Time, they wou'd seem to pay the greatest Reverence to these *Reformers* ; and much more to the *Authority* of the *first* and *purest* Ages of *Christianity* ; whose *Fathers* and *Councils* spoke all the *High Things*, before quoted, in Behalf of *Episcopacy*, far beyond the Language of our later *Apologists* for that *Apostolic Hierarchy* ; or what durst now be repeated, except from such *unquestionable Authority*.

AND now, let me tell our *Dissenters* of all *Denominations*, that they imitate the *Hardness* of the *Jews*, who built the *Sepulchers* of those *Prophets*, whom their *Fathers* slew ; while, at the same Time, they adher'd to, and out-did the Wickedness of their *Fathers*, in *Persecuting* the *Successors* of those *Prophets*.

I make no Question, but by this Time, I have made my self many Enemies by talking thus freely against the *Dissenters*. But if I have, all that I can say is, that I wou'd willingly displease no Man, but live at Peace with all the World. God knows my Heart, I hate no Man's Person, but would do him all the Good that is in my Power. But if I cannot do him that Good without displeasing him, I ought to prefer his Good to the disturbing him a little ; else I do not really love him. And if he takes Offence at me for this, it is his Fault, not mine.

AND truly as to our *dissenting Brethren* upon the *Point of Religion*, I look upon their Case with the greatest *Compassion* and *Concern* that is possible for the sake of their *Souls*, which to me they seem to hazard upon the greatest *Uncertainty*, and the most *causelessly* of any upon *Earth*.

FIRST *causelessly*, because they pretend to be one with us as to *Doctrin* and *Worship*, and break off for nothing but what themselves call *indifferent Things*; and in which they declare they can comply *occasionally* with a good *Conscience*.

BUT then, secondly, their Separation is upon the greatest *Uncertainty*, if not a *Certainty* against them, which I earnestly invite them to consider, with that *Seriousness* which their *Eternal Salvation* do's require.

FOR if *Christ* delegated his Power to his *Apostles*, and they to others, to continue to the End of the World.

IF the *Apostles* did delegate *Bishops* under them, in all the *Christian Churches*, which they planted throughout the whole Earth.

IF *Episcopacy* was the known and receiv'd Government of all the *Churches* in the World, not only in the *Apostolic Age*, but in all the *Succeeding Ages* for 1500 Years.

IF it was not possible for *Churches* so dispers'd into so many far distant *Regions*, to concert all together, and at once, to alter that Frame of Government which had been left them by the *Apostles*.

IF such an *Alteration* of Government cou'd not be without great Notice to be taken of it, as if the Government of a Nation was chang'd from *Common-wealth* to *Monarchy*.

AND if no *Author* or *Historian* of those Times makes the least Mention of such a *Change* of Government, but all with one Voice speak of *Episcopacy*, and the *Succession* of the *Bishops* in all the *Churches*, from the Days of the *Apostles*; and in those *Ages* of *Zeal*, when the *Christians* were so forward to sacrifice their *Lives* in Opposition to any *Error* or *Deviation* from the *Truth*, no one takes any Notice of *Episcopacy* as being an *Encroachment* upon the Right of the *Presbyters* or the *People*, or being any the least *Deviation* from the *Apostolical Institution*.

I say, if these Things are not *possible* to any thinking Man, then *Episcopacy* must be the *Primitive* and *Apostolical Institution*. And it is as *impossible* to be otherwise, as to suppose that all the great Monarchies in the World shou'd be turn'd into *Common wealths*, or the *Common-wealths* into *Monarchies*, all at one *Instant*, and yet (too) that no Body shou'd know it, or that those who wrote the *Histories* of those Times, shou'd take no *Notice* of it, or any Man be found to assert his *Liberty* and *Freedom* against such flagrant *Usurpations*! Or that none of those who had the *Government* before shou'd complain of any *wrong* done to them, or set up their *Claim*! —

SUCH *Revolutions* cou'd not happen, but they wou'd have set the World in a Flame. And if *Presbytery*, or any other *Form* of Government except *Episcopacy*, had been the *Primitive Institution*, the *Bishops* cou'd never have stolen themselves into Possession, and *usurp'd* upon all *Churches* without any *Notice*, and without vast *Struggling* and *Contest*.

Is not the *change* of Church-Government in *Scotland* from *Episcopacy* to *Presbytery* since the *Revolution*, very well known? And was it not known, that the Church of *England* was overthrown in the late Times of *Usurpation*? Is there any *History* of those Times does not make mention of it?

How then can we suppose that *Episcopacy* (if an *Usurpation*) shou'd have prevail'd in all the *Churches* of the *World*, without the least *Notice* or *Opposition* by any whatsoever?

THIS being settled to a *Demonstration*, I wou'd next lay before our *unhappy-dissenting Brethren* what the *Consequence* will be, if we *willfully* and without any *Necessity* break off from *Episcopacy*, which has descended to us from the *Apostles*, by as *clear* and *evident Fact* as that there were *Emperours* in *Rome* after *Cesar*, or *Kings* in *England* since *William the Conquerour*. For it is as evident in all *Ecclesiastical Histories*,

ries, that there were *Bishops* in all *Churches* from the very *Beginning*.

IF *Bishops* then were constituted as *Governors* of *Churches*, he that disowns the *Governor* of any *Society* or *Corporation* disowns the *Government* of it, and cannot be call'd a *Member* of such a *Society*, and consequently has no *Title* or *Right* to the *Privileges* of it.

THIS is evident both in *Fact* and *Reason* every Day before our Eyes. And the *Dissenters* will allow it in every Case but *their own*. And in *their own*, when any break off from them. Therefore I wou'd earnestly *exhort* them to *consider* of their Case, and that it must be the same in their Case as in others, for that the *Reason* is the same :

AND if so, then their *Ordinations* in *Opposition* to *Episcopacy* are not only *invalid* but *Sacrilege*, and *Rebellion* against *Christ* who did *institute* this *Society*, and gave them their *Charter*, and if their *Ordinations* are *null*, then their *Baptisms* are so too, and all their *Ordinances*. They are out of the *visible Church*, and have no *Right* to any of the *Promises* in the *Gospel*, which are all made to the *Church*, and to none other.

NAY, *Baptism* by any other *Lay-men* or by a *Mid-wife* in Case of *Necessity*, is more excusable, and I shou'd have a less Sin to answer for, if I shou'd suffer my *Child* to be *baptiz'd* by such an One ; than by *those* who pretend to have *Ordination*, but have *none*, except what is worse than *none*, that is, what is in direct *Opposition* to the *Church*. For the first of these pretend to no *Commission* or *Authority*, but excuse themselves *purely* upon the *Point* of *Necessity*, and wou'd not have thought it *lawful* for them to do if any *Clergy-man* had been present : Whereas the *other* claim it as their *Right*, and in *Preference* to the *Bishops* or *Clergy*. The *Difference* seems to me ; as if in my *Absence* one shou'd break open my *Doors* on *Supposition* of a *Fire*, and an *House-breaker* shou'd do it to *rob* me.

IF we cannot have the *Ordinances* as *Christ* has commanded them, it is more dutiful to *God*, and ex-

expresses greater *Humility* in our selves, to pray Him not to impute the *Want* of them to us, than to take upon us to institute new *Ordinances*, or set up a new *Priesthood* of our own Heads, as *Jereboam* and *Micah* did.

BUT it is certainly less culpable for a *Lay-man* to do some one *Priestly Act*, as to baptize, &c. upon a *Necessity*, and where no *Clergy-man* is to be had, than if he shou'd set up false *Orders*, and pretend to the *sacred Office*, and gather *Congregations* after him, in direct *Opposition* to the Church, and to tear her in pieces. There is no Comparison betwixt these two Cases.

I ask any sober Man, nay, any Man of but *common Sense* or *Reason*, this one Question.

Suppose you had a *Grant* of an *Estate* or *Office* from the *King*, but it was to pass the *Great Seal*; and my Lord Chancellor not being in the way, wou'd you counterfeit the *Great Seal* to secure your *Grant*?

No, surely; for if you did, (I have a strong Fancy) you wou'd lose your *Grant*, and be hang'd for *Treason* into the Bargain.

I verily believe you'd think it much safer to trust the *King's Promise*, and tell him how it was not in your *Power* to have the GREAT-SEAL put to the *Grant*.

WITHOUT doubt you are of Opinion, that this wou'd be the most safe and wise Course you cou'd take. And the *King* wou'd (surely) lay no Blame upon you for what was not in your *Power* to help.

Now I apply it. We have a promise of *Salvation* by the *Redemption* of *Christ*. But it is requir'd that this *Grant* be Sign'd and Seal'd by *Baptism*. The *Apostles*, and their *Successors* the *Bishops* of the Church, are those empower'd by *Christ* to affix this Seal of Baptism to the *Grant*, either by themselves, or their lawful *Deputies* whom they shall empower to do it: Such as the *Priests* and *Deacons*, to whom they give this Commission by *solemn Words*, and the laying on of their *Hands*.

Now

Now, suppose I were in a Place where none of these were to be had. Shall I take upon me to affix the *Seal* myself? Or shall I constitute *Priests* or *Deacons* to affix it for me? or shall I rather chuse to want it, since I cannot have the *proper Officers*, and trust to the *Mercy of Christ*?

I am sure I shou'd chuse the last. It wou'd be much greater *Humility* in me, and *Trust* in *God* too, who, I wou'd not doubt, wou'd supply the Defect which was not in my Power to help, than to counterfeit the *Great Seal* of *Heaven*, and to take upon me to appoint *Officers* to represent *Christ*, and to sign and seal his *Covenant*, as his *Attorneys*, in his *Name*, to whom he gave no such Commission; this wou'd be to usurp the *Prerogative* of the great and tremendous *God*, and the highest *Treason* against the *Majesty* of *Heaven*! against the *King of Kings*, and *Lord of Lords*! I shou'd think my *Grant* much more secure without any *Seal*, than with such a *Seal*, and so affix'd.

AND now I apply myself with a Christian Concern to our *misled Dissenters*, and let them see and consider, that when they receive (what they call) the *Sacraments* of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, in their *Congregations*, they receive no *Sacraments*, nor are their Children baptiz'd any more than if a *Midwife* had done it: Nay, that it had been less guiltily done by her, in Case of *Necessity*, than by the others in the ordinary Way; whose *Ministrations* are not only void, and null, (if they have not a lawful *Authority*) but are *Sacrilegious*, and like the *Offerings* of *Korah*, are *Rebellion* against the *Lord*. And will tender Parents carry their Children to, at least, disputed *Baptisms*? while the *Presbyterians* themselves deny not the *Validity* of *Episcopal Ordination*, and consequently of the *Sacraments* administered by their *Hands*. Will you run an *Hazard* then, where your *Souls* are concern'd, and of your Children, when you may be sure, by the Confession

of all Parties, even of those Men, who (thro' Ignorance) unhappily *mislead* you? O lay your Hands upon your Hearts, and stand not out wilfully against your own *Salvation*, and in so plain a *Case*, where you have no *Excuse*!

AND now, I am well assur'd, that to those who with *unprejudic'd* Minds seek for Truth: I say, I am sure, that what has been offer'd in Defence of *Episcopacy* will appear sufficient: Yet, lest any foolish Person who studies to obscure *Truth* for *Interest*, and to support a bad Cause, shall notwithstanding all that has been said, make use of that old *thread bare* Argument, and harp still upon the old *worn out* String, I mean the *Etymology*, the *senseless Jingle* of the Words *Bishop* and *Presbyter*; and because the Word *Presbyter* sometimes signifies a *Bishop*, and the Word *Bishop* sometimes signifies a *Presbyter*, and therefore they will (with just as much *Learning* as *Modesty*) stand to it, that *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are the *same Thing*.

OR if any *learned Gentleman*, to shew his Parts, shou'd still patronize this forsaken Argument, (tho' I am certain that most People will be fully satisfy'd, that those who shall insist upon it, have nothing else to say.) I shall now, that the poor People may not be deceived with such senseless *Logomachy*, say something further to it.

THE Word *Imperator*, which we translate *Emperor*, sometimes signifies the *General* of an *Army*, or any other *Commander*; for the Word signifies *Commander*. And we know that many command besides the *Emperor* himself. Now suppose any to shew his *Wit* and *Learning*, shou'd set up a new *Hypothesis* and say, That there never was an *Emperor* in *Rome*; and support this *learned Nonsense* with abundance of *Quotations* out of the *Roman Authors*, where the *General* of an *Army* was call'd *Imperator*, and thence shou'd *most wisely* argue that *Cesar* or *Augustus*, or any other of the *Roman Emperors*,

perors were no more than bare *Generals* of *Armies*, but had nothing to do in *civil* Affairs, or were any *civil Magistrates* at all.

I suppose every Body wou'd laugh at him, or if he were in earnest, think him a *Madman*. Because he play'd with Words against plain *Fact*. And all the *Histories* of those *Times* wou'd contradict him and shew his *Folly*. When I see the Pictures of the 12 *Cæsars* or Emperors of *Rome*: I mean so many Kings with *regal Power*, and I have been always told so, and never heard any Body say otherwise.

AND the *Succession* of the *Roman Empire* was deduc'd in the *Succession* of their *Emperors*. And it is told when one Emperor did *succeed* another. There were many *Imperatores*, that is, *Generals* in every one of these *Reigns*, as it is with us; but the *Government* was not deduc'd in the *Succession* of these *Generals*, but only of their *Kings* or *Emperors*, in the proper Acceptation of the Word, as *Kings*.

AND I will appeal to any learned Dissenter in the World, whether in the *Ecclesiastical Histories*, the *Succession* of all the Churches is not reckon'd by the *Succession* of the Bishops alone, and not of the Presbyters or Deacons.

THIS makes the Case clear. And that the Bishops were the *Governors* of the Churches. And as I said before, how cou'd these Bishops have thrust themselves thus into the chief *Government* all the World over, without any Opposition, and to be own'd as such, and *acknowledg'd* by all, if the *Original Institution* had been *Presbytery* or any other *Frame of Government*? Or if there were *Presbyterians* in those Days, (as our *Presbyterians* wou'd have us believe) they were much more moderate and complaisant than our *Presbyterians*, to let the Bishops *usurp* upon their *Authority*, and engross all into their own Hands, without so much as one *Remonstrance*! or the least *Snarle* from any of them! Strange! — wondrous strange!

NONE then did object that *Bishop* and *Presbyter* were the same Thing, from the *Etymology* of the Words.

Such *Trifling* wou'd not then have been endur'd! They knew very well, that the Word *Επίσκοπος* which we translate *Bishop*, signify'd an *Over-seer*, in which Sense every *Shepherd* may be call'd an *Επίσκοπος*, much more any *Presbyter* or *Pastor* in the Church. The *Etymology* of the Word *πρεσβύτερος* is *Elder-man*, which we call *Alderman*, and the *Seniores* or *Elders* was us'd to express *Authority*, and not only *Age*; as the *Elders*, that is, the *Chiefs* or *Heads* of the People, an Expression frequent in *Scripture*. Hence *Ambassadors* have been call'd *Presbyters*, and other *Great Men*, or in *great Employments*. Now, if any Man shou'd infer from this, that every *Ambassador* or *Alderman* of the City were a *Clergyman*, and of the Degree of *Presbyter* in the Church, I suppose he cou'd perswade but a few. The Word *Διάκονος* signifies a *Minister* or *Servant*; and *Rom. xv. 8.* *Christ* is call'd *Διάκονος*, (as I said before) shall we argue therefore, that *Christ* is no more than a *Servant*, and of the Order of *Deacon* in the Church? Such, and no better are the Arguments from the *Etymology* of Words, that *Bishops* are no more than *Presbyters*.

Such poor Stuff as this frets even my *Patience*! But leaving this Matter, let us go on and try if we can answer the next *doughty Objection*; which tho' it is not, yet (at first sight) looks something like an Argument; and 'tis this. Some Men say, that *Episcopacy* did not come in all at once, but encroach'd by Degrees.

A Y, was it So then? — Very well. Then let them shew when it began: And we will take care to reckon for the *Encroachments* afterwards.

BUT say they, there are many *Errors* whose *Beginning* we do not know, and yet we may discover them to be *Errors* afterwards. That the *Tares* were

were sown while the *Husbandman* slept, but were not discover'd 'till they were grown up. Thus *erroneous Opinions* may be instill'd from one to another, and propagate a long Time before the World takes *public Notice* of them; and *no Body* may be able *then* to tell who was the *first Broacher*. And it might be so of *Episcopacy* and Things of the LIKE NATURE. Might it so?—Alack-a-day!—really I never dreamt that it might be so of any Thing of *this Nature*!

BUT however, we must defend our selves as well as we can; and therefore in Answer to this terrible Argument, I say,

THAT 'tis very true, *this* may be in *Opinions*, which are *broach'd* and *propagated* in the *Dark*.

BUT harkee Gentlemen; *Government* is not a Thing of *this Nature*. It is always *public* and before every Man's *Face*. And when it is *alter'd* or *overthrown*, every Man has a *Share* in it, and *feels* it, it affects him and his *Circumstances* more or less. And no *History* of those Times can miss taking *Notice* of it. Now *Episcopacy* is *Government*. And cou'd not be introduc'd but upon the *Ruins* of that *Government* (whatever it was) that was before it.

THEREFORE, I earnestly desire the *DISSENTERS* to do me this one small Favour, that is, shew me the *Beginning* of *Episcopacy*. For *THAT Government* (however it be as to *private Opinions*) whose *Beginning* we know not, must have been from the *Beginning*.

THUS no Man can fix the Time when *Monarchy* began in the World since *Adam*, or the *Division* of the *Nations* after the *Flood*. And this is a *Demonstration* that the *Original* of *Monarchy* was from *thence*, and did not begin in any *after Time*.

BUT we can punctually tell the *Beginning* of every *Common-wealth* in the World, all *Histories* of those Times do tell it,

AND

AND thus, no Man can tell the *Beginning* of *Episcopacy* at any Time since the *Apostles*. But we all know the *Beginning* of *Presbytery*, that there was no *Presbyterian Church* in the World before *John Calvin*.

THIS is the Reason why I demand from the *Dissenters*, that they wou'd shew the Time when *Episcopacy* did begin. For if they cannot shew it, they must own *Episcopacy* to have descended all the way from the *Apostles*.

BUT some Men may say, Is not an *Universal Bishop* over all the *Bishops* and Churches in the World a great Change in the Government of the Church? And the Church of Rome pretends to have deriv'd this Form of Government all the way down from St. Peter. Therefore, by your own Argument, you are oblig'd to shew the Time when this *Universal Bishop* did set up at Rome.

THIS we do with great Readiness. The first that assum'd to be *universal Bishop* was *John Bishop of Constantinople*; against whom *Gregory I.* call'd the Great, wrote with much Spirit, and said that none of his own *Predecessors Bishops of Rome* did ever assume such an arrogant Title, which he calls likewise *blasphemous*, and said that whoever did arrogate it to himself, was a *Lucifer* for Pride, and the *Fore-runner* of *Anti-Christ*.

YET Pope Boniface 3. next Successor but one to *Gregory I.* took this Title, given him by *Phocas* that Tyrant and Usurper, who first depos'd and then Murder'd his Master *Mauricius the Emperor*. This was in the *Seventh Century*. And from that Beginning we shew the Progress of this *Usurpation* of the *Popes*, and the Struggle of the *Bishops* against it, in many Instances, even at the Council of *Trent*, and very remarkably in the Year 1682. by the memorable Decrees than made by the whole Body of the *Bishops* and Clergy of *France*. But it wou'd fill an History

to tell of the *Opposition* made by the Bishops and other learned Men.

AND not only as to this Point of *Government*, but even in the *Doctrinal Disputes* we have with the Church of Rome, (whole *Beginnings* are less obvious) as of *Purgatory*, *Invocation of Saints*, *Trans-substantiation*, *Half Communion*, *Prayers in an Unknown-Tongue*, &c. even in all these Cases, we are able to tell the *Beginnings* of them, and the *Time* when there was no such Thing. Let this be shew'd of *Episcopacy*.

THIS is a sure and certain Rule whereby to know the *Original* of any *Species* of *Government*, whether in Church or State; That if we cannot assign its *Beginning* to any Time short of that to which it pretends, we must allow it to have been from that Beginning. For that *Government* is of such a public Nature, that the Change of it must be known to every Body.

THIS may be illustrated by enquiring into the *Original* of *Monarchy*, and of *Common wealths* and other *Popular Governments*. The first *Common wealths*, that ever were in the *World*, were those in *Greece*, and the *Histories* of those *Times* give a particular Account of the *Beginning* of every one of them. We all know how long the *Governments* in *Venice*, in *Holland*, in *Geneva*, &c. have been in the *Frame* they now are.

LET then the *Common-wealth-men* and the *Orators* for the *Power* of the *People*, (if they will argue fairly and upon the *Square* with us) set down the *Time* when *Monarchy* did begin in the *World*, and see if this *Clew* will not lead them up to the Division of the *Nations* after the *Flood*, which I am sure no Man (who has seen that Account which holy *Scripture* gives us of it) will venture to say, was done by the *People*. And from that *Time* to *Adam* the Transition is easie, *Noah* being but the tenth from him, and the *Names* of the other nine *Patriarchs* are given us in the fifth of *Genesis*. Let the
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Republicans then consider at what *Æra* of *Time* they will bring in their *Original State of Nature* !

AND this *Demonstration* is as clear for *Episcopacy*, as for *Monarchy*. Unless our *Dissenters* can shew the *Time*, since the *Apostles*, when there was no *Episcopacy* in the *Church*. Or that they think such a *Revolution of Government*, as from *Presbytery*, or *Independency*, to *Episcopacy* cou'd be brought about without any *Body's Notice or Knowledge* !

WHAT think ye my *Friends* ? Was there ever a *Time* in the *World* when all *Mankind* (all but the *Usurpers* !) were all a-sleep — But whatever your *Thoughts* may be concerning this *Matter*, (or whether you may think it worth your while to spend one *Thought* about it, you who care not to trouble yourselves with such *Trifles*, with such indifferent *Things* as these) I say, whatever your *Thoughts* may be concerning this *Matter*, I assure you the *World* will expect something of an *Answer* to that same *short Question*, viz. *When did Episcopacy begin* ?

AND I am resolv'd to keep you close to this *Point*. For this determines the *Cause* all at once, without any *Poring* or *Disputing*. Let us then know, (you I mean who are so ready at answering) let us know I say, *when Monarchy or when Episcopacy did begin*. And if you cannot fix the *Time Short* of the *Beginning* of *Mankind*, or of *Christianity*, it wou'd be *Modesty* as well as *Justice* to knock under, and be silent from henceforth and forever.

THE *Dissenters* are likewise disarm'd of the *Retortion* I foresee they wou'd have made upon us, and with which they wou'd have made a great *Noise* among the *People*, and represented us as *Papists*, in affording the *Church* of *Rome* an *Handle* against us, and obliging us to fix the *Time* when the *Papal Usurpation* did begin; otherwise that we must give up to them the *Universal Supremacy* of the *Pope*, as deduc'd from *St. Peter*. But we have fix'd the very *Time*, and nam'd the *Century*, and the very *Pope*,

Pope who first assum'd the *Title of universal Bishop*; and shewn the Opposition made to that Pretence ever since, even by the *Bishops and Divines* of the *Church of Rome*. So that this *Cause* and that of *Episcopacy* come not near one another, upon our Argument, unless the *Dissenters* can shew the like Beginning of *Episcopacy*, and the like Opposition made to it from the very *Beginning*.

AND as I said before, The far greatest Part of the *Christian Church* never did own, nor do own at this Day the *Supremacy of Rome*, without reckoning those in the *West* who have broken off from it since the *Reformation*. But the *Dissenters* cannot shew any One single *Church* in the *whole World* that did not own *Episcopacy*, and was not it self *Episcopal*, from the Days of the holy *Apostles* down to Mr. *Calvin*. AND at this Day they are all *Episcopal*, except a *Few*, very *Few* in Comparison where his *Discipline* has prevail'd in some *Corners* of the *World*. And I have shewn before, that *He* and *Beza* and the first *Reformers* did give full *Attestation* to *Episcopacy*, and pleaded *Necessity* for their Departing from it; but *anathematiz'd*, and reckon'd those as *Mad-men* who did oppose it, or wou'd not join with it where they might have had it with *Purity of Doctrine and Worship*, as in *England*, which they particularly nam'd, and wish'd they cou'd enjoy so great a *Blessing*, and pray'd for the *Prosperity* of our *Episcopacy*.

OUR *Dissenters* and their *Cause* is *disarm'd* and *deserted* every where, and by all. They plead no *Necessity*, but dispute against the *Government of Episcopacy*, as *Novel*, and as an *Usurpation* upon the *primitive Government* of the *Church*. And yet they can shew none other that ever was, before Mr. *Calvin*, in any Part of the *Christian World*. Never was, a *Cause*, I think, so *expos'd*, and strip'd so *naked* as this!

HERE I wou'd desire the *Reader* to take notice, that tho' there is not the same *Reason* or *Demonstration* to see the *Beginning* of *Errors* in *Opinion*, as the *Revolutions*

volutions of Government in any Society; yet that we can trace out the Beginnings even of those Doctrinal Errors we charge upon the Church of Rome, some of which I nam'd. And the Method to come at the Knowledge of their Original is this; When Opinions come abroad, and make a stir in the World, they are then Facts, and may be disprov'd as other Facts are. We can tell when they first appear'd, and that they did not appear before. And this is the Method by which we disprove the Doctrinal Errors in the Church of Rome, and shew them to be Novelties.

AND here I beg leave to give a little friendly Advice to our *misled Dissenters* of all *Denominations*.

MY Friends, what has been said as to *Episcopacy* is *undeniable*, and a plain *Demonstration* from *Fact*, which is *so sure* an Argument that nothing can be reply'd.

AND I am likewise *as sure*, that it is *downright impossible*, but that what has been said, must create a Doubt at least in any considering Man, *whether he ought not to submit to Episcopacy.*

NOW suppose I come to the *Sacrament*, and have any Doubt whether this Man is *lawfully ordain'd*, and can *consecrate* and *administer* the *Holy Sacrament* to me, *will not that of Rom. 14. 23. come into my Mind? He that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of Faith, for whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin.* In what a Condition then are our unhappy Dissenters who cannot eat in *Faith*, unless they *fully*, *plainly*, and *clearly answer* what has been said, so as to leave no *Doubt* behind it! They may (which God forbid) shut their Eyes, and go on *willfully*, but this will be a fresh *Aggravation*, and will double their *Sin*.

WHAT *Compassion* can they have for their *tender Infants*, to carry them to disputed *Baptism*, when they may have *that* which is *clear*, and *undisputed* offer'd to them! will they present the *Provocation* of their *Offerings*, and pawn their *Souls* upon the greatest *Uncertainty*! Will they dare

dare to say, that it is not an *Uncertainty* at best, when they will not because they cannot answer for themselves! Is not this to be *self-condemn'd*! To put the *Stumbling-block* of their *Iniquity* before their *Faces*, and then come to enquire of the Lord!

THIS I shou'd think were enough to rouse the *Conscience* of any *Dissenter* that is not harden'd to a *Stone*. I'm sure, if I was a *Dissenter*, it wou'd prick me to the *Heart*. And 'till I cou'd give an Answer to what has been said in these Papers, I wou'd never go to a *Meeting*, lest I perish'd in their *Sin*: I wou'd not receive their *Sacraments*, lest I offer'd their *Provocations*: And I shou'd think my self guilty of the *Blood* of my *Child*, if I brought it to their *Baptism*: At least my own *Blood* wou'd lie upon my *HEAD*, if I did it with a *doubting Mind*, while I cou'd have that *Baptism* which was *undisputed* to make my *Child* a *Member* of the *Church*. And how can he who has thrust himself out of the *Church*, admit another to be a *Member* of it? Can I make another *Free* of any *Corporation*, who am not *Free* my self? No. If I am baptiz'd by a *Schismatick*, I am baptiz'd into his *Schism*, and made a *Member* of it, and not of the *Church* against which he is in *Rebellion* and open *Defiance* to it. The *Children* of *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, were swallowed up with *Them*. If we will hazard our selves, let us have some *Compassion* for our *innocent Children*!

THE Charge upon them is *very, very heavy*; I must confess it is *exceeding heavy*, but it is as true as it is *great*. I know it will raise the *Indignation* of many of them, and I shall hear it from all *Hands*. What! — say they, wou'd he *un-Church* us, and *annul* our *Sacraments*? — wou'd he make the *ordinary Ministrations* of our *Ministers* as little *valid*, and more *guilty* than if perform'd by a *Mid-wife* in Case of *Necessity*? Where, where is the *Moderation* of this Man? Where is his *Charity*? He makes all our *Meetings* to be *Assemblies* of *Korah*, in *Rebellion* against *God*! We are not able
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to bear it— We will not bear it — It is not fit such a Man shou'd live upon the Earth. All this I expect to hear.— And now I desire them to hear my Defence.— I hope they are not all provok'd beyond the Bounds of *Reason*.

FIRST then, I desire them to tell me, what they think it is a Man's Duty to do, if he is only verily perswaded this is their Case? (But methinks if he proves it too, he shou'd be suffer'd to speak) shall he be *silent* and let them go on in their *Sin*? and let them *perish* eternally for him, rather than he wou'd be at the Pains to *convince* them if he cou'd; or rather than displease them, or lose their *Favour*, or run the *hazard* of what they might do to him (*if permitted*) in the *Bitterness* of their *Spirit*? Or, in the next Place, if such a *Silence* wou'd be highly *guilty*, and argue *Self-love*, rather than the *Love* of our *Neighbour*? shall he then, since he must *speak*, or offend his own *Conscience*, shall he *mince* the Matter, and *alleviate* or *excuse*, and smooth over their *Sin* till it appear *tolerable*? This wou'd be really to sew *Pillows*, to hate our Neighbour, and *suffer Sin upon him*, and *to bear Sin for him*, as our Margin reads, *Lev. xix. 17*. For *that sin* lies upon me, which I suffer to go *unreprov'd* in another.

AND (if I do my Duty as a good *Christian*) I am to lay out his *Sin* before him in its proper Colours, to let it appear as *black* and *beinous* as it is, that he *flatter not himself in his own Sight*, until his *abominable Sin* be found out. 'Till it find him out, and *Judgment* overtake him, when (alas!) there shall be no Remedy. But if he *repent*, then, as *Solomon* says, he that *reproveth*, will find more *Favour* than he that *flattereth* with his Lips.

Therefore I hope still to find their *Favour* in an *honest Way*; in a *true* and *conscientious* Discharge of my *Duty*, tho' at present I purchase their *Displeasure*.

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sure. But if (*which God forbid*) it shou'd happen otherwise, yet I have delivered mine own Soul.

AND I do here protest before God, in the most serious manner, *that I believe their Case to be really as I have put it* And the Arguments which I have offer'd to them have fully convinc'd myself (and many others) that *Episcopacy* was the *primitive* and *Apostolic Institution* of the Government of the Church. And consequently that those *Presbyters* and others who break off from it, are guilty of the very *Sin of Korah*, and of those *Christians* of whom St. Jude speaks, *who separate themselves, and perish in the Gain-saying of Korah*. I know nothing wherein his *Gain-saying* did consist, but in his *Gain-saying* to the *Priesthood of Aaron*. He differ'd not with *Aaron* in any other Point either of *Doctrine* or *Worship*. And since St. Jude brings down this very Case of *Korah* to the *Christian Church*, and applies it to those who separated themselves, and broke off from their, *lawful Governors* in the Church, I see not why it is not as applicable at this Day.

AND that *usurping* upon the *Christian Priesthood*, and *separating* our selves in Opposition to it, is as great a Sin as it was in the *Levitical Dispensation*, if not greater, as much greater as the *Priesthood* which God ordain'd by *Christ*, is of more *Dignity* and *Regard* with HIM than what HE appointed by his Servant *Moses*. For *Moses* was but a *Type* of *Christ*, and the *Priesthood* and *Sacrifices* appointed by him, were but *Types* of the *nearer* and more *expressive* CHRISTIAN *Sacrifice* and *Priest-hood*.

SHALL then the *Usurpers* of the *Levitical Priest-hood* be swallow'd up quick into the *Pit*, and is there no *Judgment* of God due to the *Usurpers* upon the *Christian Priesthood*? Was it *Death* for any but the *Priests* to offer the *legal Sacrifices*, and may the *Evangelical Sacrifice* be offer'd, without Offence, by any Hands not *lawfully ordain'd*?

AND must they not be told of this? Must I be their *Enemy* because I tell them the *Truth*? Is it because I love them not? — God knoweth, I declare, so far as I know my own Mind, (tho' I cannot say as St. Paul did in a like Case, yet) I wou'd giv my *Life* to purchase their *Reconciliation*, and that I might see the *Unity* of the *Spirit* in the Bond of *Peace*.

IF they will not believe me, I cannot help it. But I will not fail to tell them the *true* and the *right* Way.

AFTER what I have said, he must want all *Charity* who does not believe my Professions are *true* and from my *Heart*. Nay, it is against my Interest to provoke so great a Body of Men, and who have so great *Power* and *Influence*, and who are capable to do me *good* or *harm*. Therefore it can be nothing that moves me to concern myself with them, and to lay their Sin before them, but the *Danger* I apprehend there is to their *Souls*.

AND it will confirm my Charge against them, if instead of answering my *plain* and *short* Argument, they return *railing Accusations* against me, and *Hatred* for my *Good will*.

INDEED I provoke them to answer, but it is not by way of *insulting*, but to shew them the little *Ground* they have for their *Separation*, when they cannot *justify* it, or answer one plain *Question* that is ask'd them, *When did Episcopacy begin?*

IT is to be hop'd, that some will consider this; and if they see not their Way thro' but that they are hedg'd in on ev'ry side, and can find nothing to *reply*, they will think of *returning*, that they *Sin* not wilfully, nor offend of *malicious Wickedness*, of whom King David says, *forgive them not*. And the severest saying in the whole Book of God, is of those *who forsake the assembling themselves together, as the manner of some is*, Heb. x. 25. For of those it is said, *That, if we sin wilfully, after we have receiv'd the Knowledge*

Knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sins, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment and fiery Indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries.

Oh! dreadful! And will Men make themselves these *Adversaries*, by forsaking the Church of Christ, and separating themselves; and run the Hazard of this terrible Sentence; and upon a Cause which they cannot defend, nor answer a Word to that plain but forceable Question I have ask'd, and without answering of which they must stand condemn'd to all the World; and (which is more) to their own Conscience! pray God give them Repentance before it be too late.

I have reduc'd the Dispute betwixt us to one single Point, of which every one may judge, a Point of *Fact* which cannot be counterfeited. That is, when Episcopacy did begin. And this determines the whole Matter, without a multitude of Quotations, or referring to many Books.

I hope what I have already said in Vindication of my *Innocency*, will be sufficient to satisfy all Persons of the *sincerity* of my *Intentions* towards them.— And so without making any further *Apology*; Go we on to silence one great Clamour, which I believe will be made against the *Doctrine* I have laid down, and which raises such *Prejudices* in the Minds of many, that if I cannot remove it, all I have said will be ineffectual; and tho' they cannot answer me, yet they will still oppose me. Some Men say, that by my Argument all the foreign Reformed Churches which have not Bishops are un Church'd, and put out of the Fold of Christ's Flock. Which is so very uncharitable, and of such dangerous Consequence to the Reformation, that if shou'd bring ten thousand Demonstrations to support it, they will not receive it.

I have spoke before of the reform'd Churches abroad which are not *Episcopal*, and yet are not *Anti episcopal*;

copal; that is, whose Principles are not against *Episcopacy*; but their *Circumstances*, the Frame of the *Civil Government* where they are, and other *Necessities* they lie under, they say, hinders them from having it. But that they highly approve it, and wish they might have it. As I have shewn from *Calvin*, and others of the first *Reformers*, and from the *Church and University of Geneva* at this Day. Who condemn our *Dissenters*, and even *anathematize* them, for setting up against *Episcopacy*, and making a *Separation* in *England* from it.

Now, if the *Necessity* of these *foreign Churches* be really and truly as they pretend, which they must know better than we, great *Allowance* will be made for the *Case of Necessity*, as of *David's* eating the *Shew-bread*, which otherwise had been *presumptuous* in him, and a *Sin*. And the *Countenance* which our *Dissenters* plead from these *foreign Churches*, is the same as if from this Example of *David*, others shou'd have set up a *Principle*, that the *Shew-bread* was no more hallow'd than any other *Bread*, and that it was lawful for any, and without any *Necessity*, to *profane* the *Temple*, and eat of that *Bread* which it was not lawful to eat, but for the *Priests* only. Is it not the same, that from a *Necessity*, pleaded in *Geneva*, &c. our *Dissenters*, without any *Necessity*, renounce and disown *Episcopacy* in itself, and for *Episcopacy* sake? — Because it is *Episcopacy*!

BUT now to put the *Case* to the utmost *Extremity*; Suppose these *reform'd Churches* shou'd, like our *Dissenters*, give up the *Plea of Necessity*, and stand it out against *Episcopacy* upon a *Principle* as *un-Scriptural*, as an *Usurpation*, and consequently as *Anti christian*. Put the *Case* thus, and what wou'd be the *Consequence*? Must the *Demonstration* of *Episcopacy* from the *Beginning* fall to the *Ground*, because a few in these latter *Ages* had departed from it? Must all the *Churches* in the *World* be given up in *Favour* of the *Calvinists*? For that

is the Case. All others are *Episcopal*, and have been so. And what proportion does the *Calvinist* Party bear to all the Churches in the Christian World? Not so much as a *Mole-hill* to a *Mountain*. Which then must give Place? Wou'd you throw down a *Mountain* to make room for a *Mole-hill*? Wou'd you throw down all *Antiquity* to make room for a very modern *Novel*? Wou'd you reject the Example of the first 1500 Years, to countenance a late *Up-start* in the two last Centuries? If so, (my Friends) if that be your Design, I wou'd willingly ask one Question more, and a serious, a very serious one too, that is, *how you will defend the Creed, the Authority of the holy Scriptures, or even any Article of the Christian Faith?* For do we believe them any otherwise than as handed down to us all the way from *Christ* and his *Apostles*, as the *Doctrine* which was once deliver'd to the *Saints*!

BUT some may say. What! wou'd you put the *Faith* and *Doctrine* of *Christ*, upon the same Level with *Episcopacy*.

TO which I answer. Whatever the *Importance* of the one or the other may be, the *Evidence* for them is the same, yea, and in one Point stronger for *Episcopacy*, as being Matter of *Government*, which is more obvious to the *Notice* of Men, and any *Change* or *Alteration* in it more observable than in *Doctrines* or *Opinions*. Tho' as I said before, *Doctrines* may become *Facts*, and provable the same way; as it is now a Matter of *Fact*, whether such and such *Doctrines* are profess'd in the *Church* of *England*, what *Books* are in the *Canon* of the *holy Scriptures* allow'd by her, &c.

AND thus the *Faith* and *Christian Doctrine*, is prov'd throughout all the *Ages* from *Christ*. We see what the *Faith* was which was all along profess'd in the *Church*. And thus we detect the *novel Doctrines* of *Rome*, and of the *Sectaries* among us.

THUS much as to the *Evidence of Episcopacy*. But now as to the *Importance* of it. There is nothing of more *Importance* to any *Society* than *Government*. It is *necessary*, and of the very *Essence* of a *Society*, without which no Number of Men cou'd be a *Society*.

THEREFORE *Government* is absolutely *necessary*, and the most of any other Thing, to the *Church*, as a *Church*, that is, as a *Society*. And the *Preservation* of the *Faith* and *Doctrine* of the *Church*, depends under God, mostly and chiefly in the *Support* of the *Government* of the *Church*, that is, in supporting her as a *Society*. Whence She is call'd in *Scripture* the *Pillar* and *Ground* of the *Truth*.

AND where her *Discipline* fails, there is an open Door for all *Errors* and *Heresies* to creep in, as the *Experience* of our own as well as of former Ages has instructed us. And as it is in all other *Governments*, the *Laws* lose their *Force*, and are forgotten, where the *Power* of the *Governors* is *cramp'd* or *overaw'd*.

BUT it may be Reply'd. The *Dissenters* have *Government* in what they call their *Churches*, for they are *Societies*, and, as you say, every *Society* must have *Government*.

IN Answer to which I say, That as every *Society* must have *Government*, so no *Society* or *Corporation* can have any other than what is prescrib'd to them by their *Charter*, granted to them by their first *Institutor* and *Founder* of their *Corporation*.

Suppose a *Mob* shou'd rise up in *London*, and suppose some of the *Common Council* or *Alderman* shou'd join with them, and they shou'd make a new *Regulation* of their *Charter* and instead of ONE *Lord Mayor* shou'd set up TEN, and make a new *Division* of their *Wards* and set over them whom they Pleas'd; and if this shou'd prevail for many *Years* together, wou'd all this make them a lawful *Government*? Might not the *King* justly bring a *Quo Warranto* against such a *Corporation*, who acted from no *Authority*
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but their own, and had quite alter'd, that is, *annull'd* the *Charter* he had given them? For all *Authority* must be deriv'd from some *Superiour*, 'till we come to *God* himself; from *whom* all *Authority* in *Heaven* and *Earth* is deriv'd. All other *Authority* is *Rebellion* against *God*, and *usurping* of his *Prerogative*.

IF *Korah* had prevail'd against *Aaron* there had been *Government* still, and it had been only changing the *Object*, that *Korah* had been the *High-Priest* instead of *Aaron*, and who knows but he was as capable of it as *Aaron*, and as good a *Man*, bating his *Rebellion*? But you see how *God* judg'd this *Case*; and that it was over-turning all *Government* by taking it off its true *Foundation* and *Basis*, as being deriv'd from *God*, and subsisting upon his *Authority*.

THIS indeed is a *Parallel-Case* to that of *Presbyters* throwing of their *Bishops*, and setting up a new *Government* and a new *Regulation* of their own. And by the same *Rule* that they broke off from their *Bishops*, others broke off from them, and wou'd have neither *Bishops* nor *Presbyters*, but every *Man*, *Woman* and *Child* took upon them the *sacred Office*, and thought it no *Usurpation*!

The *Priests* of *Jereboam* had *Government*. And they were *ten* to *two* of the *Tribes*. Yet the *ten* were the *Scismatics*, (if I may be allow'd to call 'em so) because they did it in *Opposition* to that *Priesthood* which *God* had ordained. So that we are not to reckon the *Truth* by *Numbers*, (as I said before) Else *Mahomet* wou'd have the better of *Christianity*. But thank *God* the *Presbyterians* have not yet that *Argument* to bragg of.

IF I shou'd be thought (as I expect I shall) too severe in my *Inferences* upon the *Dissenters* leaving the *Communion* of the *Church* of *England*, as if it were not only throwing themselves out of the *Church*, but even forsaking *Christ* himself. This

may be thought a carrying the Matter too far. If I had made it a *Crime*, and but a *MODERATE Crime*, it had been *tolerable* and they wou'd have said something to it. But now(perhaps) they will not *Answer a Word*.

BUT then I have this to say to them, that it is because they have not a *Word* to answer. For is the *Greatness* of the *Charge* a Reason why a Man ought not to *clear* himself? I thought Men wou'd think themselves more concern'd to answer an heavy *Charge* than a slight one. And no Doubt they wou'd, if they thought they were able to do it, or their *Cause* cou'd bear it.

BUT alas! why do they call it my *Charge* upon them? I only lay before them that *Censure* which God has pronounc'd upon their *Sin*. I can neither make it more nor less. And I shou'd not deal faithfully by them if I either *added* or *subtracted* one *Tittle* of what God has *threatn'd*. It would be *deceiving* them to their own *Destruction*; and their *Blood* wou'd be requir'd at my Hand. *Wherefore* (as St. Paul said, *Acts* xx. 26, 27.) I take you to record this Day, that I am pure from the *Blood* of all Men; for I have not *shunned* to declare unto you, all the *Council* of God. Whereby the *Apostle* do's imply, that he had not been pure from their *Blood*, if he had kept back any of the *Council* of God, and not declar'd it all and wholly unto them.

Now I beseech the *Dissenters*, as they wou'd avoid the fierce *Anger* of God, to look upon their own *Sin* in the Example given of it in *Korah*, and which St. Jude says is an Example to those who *separate themselves* in the *Christian Church*. The *Dispute* of *Korah* with *Aaron* was *personal*, he laid *Pride* and *Ambition* to the *Charge* of *Aaron* and his *Sons*, as if they had engross'd the *Priesthood* to themselves. And the *popular* Argument against them was, that they were no *holier* than other Men. That all the *Congregation* was *holy*, every one of them; this catch'd the *Populace*, they were glad to

to hear of this, and to see *themselves* exalted ! They then began to think (as some among us) that they had no Need of the *Ministration* of *Aaron* or his *Sons*, but cou'd *minister* unto themselves, seeing they were all *holy*, and why then shou'd they not be accepted of God, as well as by the *Mediation* of *Aaron* or his *Sons*, who were no better (no not a Bit) than *Themselves* ? Read *Numb. xvi. 3.* *And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, saying, you take too much upon you, seeing all the Congregation are holy every one of them, and the Lord is among them; wherefore then lift ye up your selves above the Congregation of the Lord ?*

THESE were their *Pretences*. But the true Reason was, that these mutinous *Presbyters* had a Mind to the *High-Priesthood*. They wou'd have been all *Bishops*. This was the Bottom of their Design, hid under all their fine *Pretences* to *Holiness*. And thus *Moses* detected them, *ver. 8, 9, 10.* *And Moses said unto Korah, hear I pray you, ye Sons of Levi, seemeth it but a small Thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the Congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the Service of the Tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the Congregation, to minister unto them; and he hath brought thee nearer to him, and all thy Brethren the Sons of Levi with thee? And seek ye the Priesthood also?*

Now let the *Dissenters* see if there be one Circumstance of Difference betwixt their Case and that of *Korah* ? And their *Pretences* are the very same, even at this Day, they have not departed from the very *Words* of *Korah*, for do they not say to their *Bishops*, *Te take too much upon Te ?* And do they not give the same Reason, the *Holiness* of the People who are *God's Heritage*, and that the *Bishops* do lift up themselves and *Lord it* over the *Heritage* of *Christ* ? Are not these their very Words ? And the same *Pretences* and the Words of *Korah* against *Aaron* ? And have they not made it apparent, that their Design

was

was the same with that of *Korab*, to seize upon the *Priesthood* for themselves? And have they not *lorded* it over the *People* with *ten-fold* the rigour that ever was shew'd by the *Bishops*? The little Finger of *Presytery* was thicker than the Loins of *Episcopacy*! (as I can fully, and will, make appear if it be deny'd) How then can they avoid applying to themselves the Answer of *Moses* to *Korab*, ver. 11. *For which Cause* (that is for his seeking the Priesthood) *both thou and all thy Company are gathered together against the Lord*. And what is *Aaron* that ye murmur against him?

AND may not we say the same to our *Korabites* at this Day? What are the *Bishops* that ye murmur against them? You are gathered together against the *Lord*; that is, against what he has *instituted* and *ordained*. For the Matter was not, what *Aaron* was, or what *Korab* was, as to their Personal Qualifications; or which of them was most fit for the *Priesthood*? No, this was not the *Case*. But which of them *God* had appointed? --- Which of them was called of *God* to this *Office*?

AND how called? (*I pray take Notice*) Not by the *Call* of the *People*, (the *Phrase* still us'd by the *Dissenters*) for *Korab* had that *Call*: Not by the inward *Call* of their own *Impulses* and *Conceit* of their own *Holiness*, for this too *Korab* and our *Dissenters* plead, that they are all *holy* every one of them, they are the *People* of the *Lord*, and the *Heritage* of *Christ*! But the *Question* was, which of them was outwardly ordain'd by such as had *Power* from *God* to ordain them? *Aaron* and his *Sons* were consecrated by *Moses*, who had special Command from *God* so to do. And *Korab* would thrust himself into this by the *Voice* of the *People* and his and their *Holiness*! For was not the *Lord* among them? -- Most assuredly! And they were the *peculiar People* out of all the *Earth*.

And as *St. Jude* argu'd against the *Separatists* in his Days, and prov'd them *Guilty* of the *Gain saying*

ing of *Korah*, so as I said before, *St. Paul* us'd the same Argument as I have as to the *Calling of Aaron*, and applies it to the *Calling of Christ*. That it must be an *outward Calling*, and *visible* before the Eyes of Men. For thus says he, speaking of the *Priesthood*, *Heb. v. 4. And no Man taketh this Honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron: So also, Christ glorify'd not himself to be made an High-Priest, but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son—Thou art a Priest for ever, &c.*

AND it was not only said so before of him in the *Scriptures*, but afterwards was proclaim'd publickly by a *Voice from Heaven*, in presence of all the *People* at his *Baptism*. And it is observable (as I remark'd before) that *HE* did not enter upon the Execution of his *Priesthood*, 'till after this publick *Notification* by the Mouth of God himself. For it is said *Matth. 4. 17. From that Time Jesus began to Preach.—*

AND if *HE* who had so long before been declar'd a *Priest* for ever, and in whom dwelt the whole *Fulness* of the *God-head* bodily, if *HE* cou'd not take this Honour unto himself; nor enter upon the Execution of his *Priestly Office*, without an *outward* and *visible Call* from God; what is that Thing which is styl'd at this Day a *CALL* from the *People*? Can their *Call*, or their *Conceits* of any Man's *Sufficiency* enable him to take this Honour unto himself? Is this the *Call* of *Aaron* and of *Christ*?—No; but it is of *Korah* and our *Dissenters* who set up upon their *Gifts*!

AND I hope what has been last said will make (at least) some *Impression* upon *Those* who are not *judicially infatuated*, That *Christ* himself the *Son of God*, tho' ordain'd from *Eternity* to be a *Priest*, and *Prophecy'd* of so long before, yet that when he came in the *Flesh*, he did not begin to *preach*, or *execute* any part of his *Priestly Office*, 'till after his *Commission* was proclaim'd by the *Voice of God* from *Heaven*,
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at his *Baptism*, in the *Audience* of all the *People*, and that the *holy Spirit* descended upon him *visibly* as a *Dove* descendeth, in all their *Sights*, giving *Conviction* even to their *outward Senses*. And that the *Apostle* argues from hence ; That he did not *glorise himself* to be made a *Priest*, but he that said unto him, *Thou art a Priest, forever, &c.* And that none can take this *Honour* to himself, but he that is called of *God*, as was *Aaron*, that is by an *outward Commission* given him by *God*, for so *Aaron* was called, being *outwardly consecrated* by *Moses*, in *Presence* of all the *People*. And this was the *Argument* *Moses* us'd against *Korah*, that he wou'd thrust himself into the *Priesthood* without any *Call* from *God*, tho' he had the *Call* of the *People*, and much *Holiness*, as he pretended. But the *Call* of *God* to the *Priesthood* was always an *outward Call*, as I have shewn.

AND it is a great *Mercy* to us. For how otherwise shou'd we know who were our *Priests*? If *inward Holiness* were the *Call*, how easily are *People* impos'd upon by false *Pretenders*, and by *Hypocrites*? Especially when they *Flatter* the *People*, like *Korah*, and call THEM all *holy* too! And as the *People*, who know not the *Heart*, are not good *Judges* of the *Qualifications* for the *Priest-hood*.

So, on the other Hand, they can have no *Authority* to invest any Man with this *Honour*: Because the *Office* of the *Priesthood* is to transact with us as from *God*, to bless in his *Name*, and to *Minister* to us in those *Ordinances* HE has commanded, to *sign* and *seal* his *Covenant* with us, and to us, as his *Ambassadors* empower'd by him to this *Purpose*. And who can appoint an *Ambassador* but the *King* who sends him? Who else can give him his *Authority*? How otherwise is the *King* oblig'd to ratify what is *sign'd* by his *Ambassadors* in his *Name* pursuant to his *Instructions*? As it is *Treason* for any *Subject* to presume to send an *Ambassador* in the *Name* of his *King*, it is really taking upon himself to be *King*:

So

So it is the greatest *Blasphemy* for any *Man* or *Men* to take upon them to appoint *Priests* for *God*, that is, in plain Consequence, usurping the *Prerogative* of *God*, and, as much as in our Power, to *dethrone* him, and set up our selves in his *Place*.

THE *Apostles* call themselves *Ambassadors* of *Christ*. And now, (I speak not (God forbid I shou'd) of any of those learn'd and truly Pious Gentlemen who are *Teachers* either here or in other Parts of the World; but it is well known and confess'd by all who know any Thing of the Matter, that the *Christian Priesthood* was never so shamefully debas'd, as it has been this Hundred Years last past, since *Christianity* has been in the World.) I say, the *Apostles* call'd themselves *Ambassadors* of *Christ*. And now, every *Tag*, *Rag* and *Long-tail* call themselves his *Ambassadors* too, by a *Call* from the *People*! Good God! — Good God! — How has the *Priesthood* been vilify'd of late! Was it a *Glory* to *Christ* to be made a *Priest*? And now, from this vile *Prostitution* of it, it is come to be thought (among some Men) the meanest of *Employments*, and hardly befitting a *Gentleman*!

THE twelve *Tribes* once strove for it as the highest *Honour*. And it fell not into *Contempt*, 'till a *King* set up by the *People*, took upon him to dispose of the *Priesthood* too, and made *Priests* of the meanest of the *People*. And this Thing became Sin to the House of *Jereboam*, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the Face of the Earth. 1. Kings. 12. 34. Thus God express'd his *Indignation* against the first *Prophaner* of the *Priesthood*, tho' these were *Priests* he had set up for his *Calves*. But God will not have the Notion of *Priesthood* to be vilify'd, tho' in an *Idolatrous Worship*. *Josepb* had Respect to this, and wou'd not suffer the Lands of the *Priests* to be sold, when all the Rest of *Ægypt* was sold to the *King*. When the *Priesthood* fell into the Hands of the *King*, to be dispos'd of by Him, it soon fell under

der one Feet of Beasts of the People, when THEY had taken upon THEM to make Kings too.

AND this Witchcraft is in the Sin of Rebellion that People are given up to believe a Lie, and think they are in the Right. Thus we must presume Korah thought, when he appear'd with his Censers before the Lord, which was a solemn Appeal to him, for the Justice of his Cause, that the Lord might thereby shew whom he had chosen, and who were holy. Numb. 16. 7. Thus have we heard of many Appeals to God by our Dissenters.

BUT some lay great Strefs upon that Description given of a Priest, Heb. v. 1. That every high-priest taken from among Men, is ordain'd for Men, in Things pertaining to God, that he may offer both Gifts and Sacrifices for Sins. They say, That here Priests are ordain'd for Men.

So they are. — But it is not said by Man. No Doubt Priests were ordain'd for the Benefit of Men. And here it is told, to offer both Gifts and Sacrifices for Sins. But the People were not to offer their own Gifts nor their Sacrifices, but by the Hands of the Priests. And these are call'd Things pertaining to God. And who but God Himself can ordain in Things pertaining to God? Can we appoint and ordain for Him? Therefore the Apostle argues ver. 4. That no Man taketh this Honour to himself, but he that is called of God. And how called? As was Aaron, that is, by an outward Call and Consecration to that Office, by those who had Power from God so to appoint and consecrate him. Thence the Apostle carries on the Argument to Christ Himself, and shews, that even HE was thus called of God, but did not glorify himself to be a Priest, as by his own Authority. And, as I have often told you before, He did not enter upon the Execution of his Priesthood, till his Commission was publickly proclaim'd from Heaven.

AND now before I conclude, I must answer one grand Objection; I have heard some Men say that
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the *Christian Priesthood* is not so plain and ascertain'd as was that of the *Levitical*, which being fix'd to one *Tribe*, there cou'd be no *Mistaking* of it.

NO? — Did not *Korab* mistake it, who was one of that *Tribe*, tho' not of the *Family* of *Aaron*? Did not *Jereboam* mistake it, (that same *Jereboam* who was set up by the *People*) and the *ten Tribes* with Him, who set up other *Priests*? Methinks this was some small *Mistake*. But did not *Micah* mistake it, who consecrated his *Son* to be a *Priest* who was not of the *TRIBE* of *Levi*? Another small *Mistake* it may be? Nay farther, did not *Sanballat* and the *Samaritans* mistake it when they set up another *Temple*? And many other *Mistakes* of this Sort we find in the *History* of the *Jews* after the *Captivity*; and after the *Maccabees*. And they mistook it so long at last, 'till the *Succession* of their *Priesthood* was lost, as it is at this Day.

BUT blessed be *God*, the *Succession* of the *Christian Bishops* is open and *flagrant* to this Day, in all the *Churches* of the *World*, except among the little *Calvinists*, who are but of *Yesterday*.

ONE *Tribe* was sufficient for *Priests* to eleven *Tribes*. But when *Christianity* was to be extended to the utmost *Parts* of the *Earth*, the *Priesthood* then cou'd not be confin'd to one *Family*. But the *Succession* of it went afterwards by *Consecration*, and not by *Inheritance*. And, as I have said, has been better preserv'd.

AND now as the *Apostle* says, *If He dyed without Mercy, who despis'd Moses's Law, and the Priesthood which he set up; of how much sorer Punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trampled under Foot the Son of God, and that Church and Priesthood which he has ordain'd and promis'd to be with it to the End of the World?*

F I N I S.



THE
EPISTLE
OF
St. I G N A T I U S
TO THE
T R A L L I A N S.

IGNATIUS, *who is also called THEOPHORUS,*
To the Holy Church which is at Tralles in Asia;
Beloved of God the Father of Jesus Christ;
Elect, and worthy of God; Having Peace through
the Flesh, and Blood, and Passion of Jesus Christ our
Hope; in the Resurrection which is by Him: Which
also I salute in its Fulness, continuing in the Apo-
stolical Character; Wishing all Joy and Happiness
unto it.



HAVE heard of your Blameless and
Constant Disposition through Patience,
which not only appears in your Out-
ward Conversation, but is Naturally
rooted and grounded in you: In like
manner as Polybius your Bishop has declared unto
me; Who came to me to Smyrna, by the Will of
God and Jesus Christ; and so rejoiced toge-
ther with me in my Bonds for Jesus Christ, that
in Effect I saw your Whole Church in Him. Having
therefore received the Testimony of your Good
Will towards me for God's sake, by Him, I seemed
to find you, as also I knew that ye were the Fol-
lowers of God.

II. For

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Moderation; by which the Prince of this World is *destroy'd*.

V. AM I not able to write to you of Heavenly things? But I fear lest I should Harm you, who are yet but Babes in Christ; (*Excuse me this Care;*) And lest perchance being not able to receive them, ye should be choaked *with them*. For even I myself, although I am in Bonds, yet am not therefore able to understand Heavenly Things: As the Places of the Angels, and the several Companies of them, under their respective Princes; Things Visible and Invisible; but in these I am yet a Learner. For many things are wanting to us, that we come not short of God.

VI. I Exhort you therefore, *or rather not I, but the Love of Jesus Christ*; that ye use none but Christian nourishment: abstaining from Pasture which is of another Kind, I mean Heresie. *For they that are Hereticks*, confound together the Doctrine of Jesus Christ; with *their own* Poison, whilst they seem worthy of Belief: As Men give a deadly Poison mix'd with Sweet Wine; which He who is ignorant of, does with the treacherous Pleasure sweetly drink in his own Death.

VII. Wherefore guard your selves against such Persons. And that you will do if you are not puffed up; but continue inseparable from Jesus Christ *our* God, and from your Bishop, and from the Commands of the Apostles. He that is within the Altar is Pure: But he that is without, that is, that does any thing without the Bishop, and Presbyters, and Deacons, is not Pure in his Conscience.

VIII. Not that I know there is any thing of this Nature among you; But I fore-arm you, as being *greatly* Beloved by me, foreseeing the Snares of the Devil. Wherefore putting on Meekness, renew your selves in Faith, that is the Flesh of the LORD; and in Charity, that is the Blood of Jesus Christ. Let no Man have any *Grudge* against his Neigh-

Neighbour. Give no Occasion to the Gentiles; lest by means of a few Foolish Men, the whole Congregation of God be Evil spoken of. For woe to that Man through whose Vanity my Name is Blasphemed by any.

IX. Stop your Ears therefore, as often as any one shall speak contrary to Jesus Christ; who was of the Race of *David*, of the Virgin *Mary*. Who was truly Born, and did Eat and Drink; Was truly Persecuted under *Pontius Pilate*; Was truly Crucified and Dead; Both Those in Heaven, and on Earth, and under the Earth being Spectators of it. Who was also truly raised from the Dead by his Father, after the same manner as he will also raise up us who believe in Him, by Christ Jesus; without whom we have no true Life.

X. But if as some who are Atheists, that is to say Infidels, pretend, that he only seem'd to Suffer: (They themselves only seeming to exist) why then am I Bound? Why do I desire to fight with Beasts? Therefore do I die in vain: Therefore I will not speak falsely against the LORD.

XI. FLEE therefore these Evil Sprouts which bring forth deadly Fruit; of which if any one taste, he shall presently Dye. For these are not the Plants of the Father; Seeing if they were, they would appear to be the Branches of the Cross, and their Fruit would be Incorruptible: By which he invites you through his Passion, who are Members of him. For the Head cannot be without its Members, God having promised a Union, that is Himself.

XII. I Salute you from *Smyrna*, together with the Churches of God that are present with Me; who have refresh'd me in all things, both in the Flesh and in the Spirit. My Bonds, which I carry about me for the sake of Christ, (beseeching him that I may attain unto God) exhort you, that you continue in Concord among your selves, and in Prayer with
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one another. For it becomes every one of you, especially the Presbyters, to refresh the Bishop, to the Honour of the Father, of Jesus Christ, and of the Apostles. I beseech you that you hearken to me in Love; that I may not by those things which I write, rise up in Witness against you. Pray also for Me; who through the Mercy of God stand in need of your Prayers, that I may be worthy of the Portion which I am about to obtain, that I be not found a Reprobate.

XIII. The Love of those who are at *Smyrna* and *Ephesus* salute you. Remember in your Prayers the Church of *Syria*, from which I am not worthy to be called, being one of the least of it. Fare ye well in Jesus Christ; being subject to your Bishop as to the Command of God; and so likewise to the Presbytery. Love every one his Brother with an unfeigned Heart. My Soul be your Expiation, not only now, but when I shall have attain'd unto God: For I am yet under Danger. But the Father is Faithful in Jesus Christ, to fulfil both mine and your Petition: In whom may ye be found unblameable.

To the TRALLIANS.

6. JY. 53

ST. Ignatius, the Author of this Epistle, was a Companion of the Apostles, and was taught the Faith of Christ from their Mouths: † He wrote this Epistle with many other as He was on his way to Rome, where he seal'd the Truth (of what he had taught and written) with his Blood, being cast to the Wild Beasts: Thus dying a glorious Martyr of the ever blessed Jesus.

His Martyrdom was but seven Yeas after the Death of St. John, who wrote the Revelations

† Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib. 3, Cap. 36.

FINIS.